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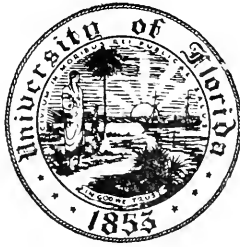
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READING ALOUD

By

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THIRD EDITION

HUMANITIES ROOM

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PREFACE

THE many teachers of interpretation who have helped to keep this book in active use during the past twenty years will find a good many changes in the present edition. There are additions, omissions, condensations, expansions, and rearrangements. Most of the chapters have been rewritten in whole or in part, the introductory sections have been consolidated, and an entirely new chapter has been added to introduce the study of poetry. These changes are designed to improve teachability in the light of the experience of many instructors with previous editions, and to take account of new developments in criticism and interpretation. Though modern criticism is not primarily concerned with literature as an oral art, its point of view can often be effectively applied to the study of oral interpretation. I have borrowed from it much that seems to me likely to be helpful in our discipline.

The basic philosophy of the book, however, remains unchanged. I still believe that our first and foremost task is to teach effective expression of simple, logical meaning, whether in conversation, oral reading, or acting; that some study of voice, pronunciation, and metrics should precede the study of serious poetry, with impersonation and acting coming later; that the interpretation of a piece of literature should derive from a close analysis of the work itself, rather than from too exclusive a study of the author's life and background; that we should not attempt to interpret literature without seeking help from the many poets and critics who have written about it during the past two thousand years; and that oral reading so conceived can be a worthy cultural and humanizing discipline in itself, quite apart from its value in radio, television, and other kinds of public entertainment.

The topics are arranged in accordance with this philosophy, and this organization has been found to be effective for teaching purposes. The cumulative *Plan of Study* and *Criteria of Oral Reading*

have been retained for the guidance of student and instructor alike. They begin at the end of Chapter 2, and are continued throughout the book, being added to as the discussion of each new topic brings out fresh points to be remembered. Review questions have been placed at the end of each chapter.

One of my main problems in this revision has been the selection of readings. I have considered omitting many of the selections in earlier editions. But time after time when I had decided to discard a selection I have had a student read it with such freshness, enthusiasm, and evident relish that I felt I had better retain it. We should not ignore the fact that to each new generation of students the selections are generally fresh and untried. And I cannot be sure that the ones I would discard may not be just the ones that other teachers would wish to have retained. Undoubtedly many of us do our best teaching on materials we have used for many years. These considerations have led me to retain almost all the reading materials from the previous edition.

Those, however, who prefer fresh materials will find them in abundance. I have provided some forty or more new selections, from modern poetry and prose. They have exciting possibilities, and if students respond to them as I think they will I shall be amply rewarded. It will be found that about half of the total number of selections in this edition are taken from works written since 1900, which is certainly giving the present century its due proportion of attention. This choice is justified by the fact that outside our textbooks older literature is much more accessible than modern. Most of the selections are short enough for convenient use in our often crowded classes, but I have added some longer passages of narrative and descriptive prose for those who wish to make use of them.

I am deeply grateful to the many users of earlier editions who have offered suggestions and criticisms. Among my colleagues at the University of Illinois I am especially indebted to Richard Murphy and Patricia McIlrath for help and encouragement.

WAYLAND MAXFIELD PARRISH

Urbana, Illinois
March, 1953

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Reading Aloud

Chapter 1

OBJECTIVES

DAY after day, year after year, a mighty deluge of printed matter pours from the presses of the land. Acres of forests are annually denuded to produce paper for books, pamphlets, magazines, journals, newspapers, circulars, reports, documents, catalogs, and advertising "literature." Somehow practically all of this material gets read. In spite of preoccupation with the daily job, and the claims upon time and attention exercised by the radio, the motion picture, television, and numberless other forms of entertainment, every literate person normally takes some time every day to read, if only headlines, comic strips, or menus. And nearly everyone in America *is* literate, since compulsory education has made illiteracy a rarity.

The notable fact about this vast quantity of reading is that almost all of it is done privately and silently for the purely personal satisfaction of the individual reader. It is not shared with others. Ours, we are told, is an age of mass communication; a single voice through a loudspeaker reaches an audience of thousands, and, by radio, an audience of millions. But though books and magazines may be shipped in carload lots, and newspapers are delivered by the truck load, they are read individually and privately. Husband and wife may indeed "share the morning newspaper," but probably by each holding a section of it and *perusing* it in silence. The latest book may be read by all the family, but by each in turn. Ordinarily each bit of printed matter has but one reader—or only one at a time.

In modern times the voice of an author is seldom, if ever, heard. He does not *speak* to his public, he *writes* for them; and the sentiments he composes are received by his "audience" only through

their eyes. They are recorded by his pen or typewriter, submitted to a publisher, and so transmitted indirectly from hand to eye, not directly from mouth to ear—as literature is still sometimes transmitted in such nonindustrial countries as China and India. For us, literature has come to mean printed matter. It is not voiced, either by the author who creates it, or by the reader whom it is intended to affect. An author is not a voice crying to his fellowmen; he is merely a book upon a shelf.

Oral reading in earlier times. All this is a development of comparatively recent times. "Reading, in its earlier stage," says Abbé Dimnet, "cannot have been remote from a magical or a hieratic process and was part of a rite. . . . Few people, in antiquity, knew how to read, and few possessed the bricks, stones, or rolls necessary for reading. So, like Herodotus at the Olympic games, they were expected to impart to their less fortunate brethren something of the treasure in their hands. Reading out loud seems to have been the rule."¹ Herodotus first published his famous history by reading it aloud to friends in his home community, and, later, to a larger and more appreciative audience in Athens. So well received were his recitations that the people voted him a sum of money equivalent to twelve thousand dollars; and it is reported that at one of these public readings a certain young man, who later also became a famous historian, was so moved that he burst into tears. In those times reading was indeed a priestly task.

When manuscripts were rare and books were unknown, literature lived in the memory, and more readily passed to the tongue to be shared with others. Contrast the joyous companionship of Chaucer's Canterbury pilgrims, regaling each other with tales of love and romance, with the gloomy isolation of the modern traveler by plane or railway, using his newspaper or magazine as a barrier to isolate himself from his fellow travelers. Our grandfathers, having fewer books and diversions than we, often read aloud to their families, generally from the Bible; and no doubt the beautiful cadences of the King James Version, *heard with the ear*, helped to form the taste of many generations of speakers, writers, and listeners. In the nineteenth century oral reading in the schools was much more common than now, every pupil being required to read

¹ *The Art of Thinking* (New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1928), p. 79.

or recite frequently such gems of literature as were provided by the McGuffey Readers. And during the same period millions of listeners heard literature, though not always of the best quality, interpreted by a host of amateur and professional public readers.

new pronunciation *vocabulary*
A revival of elocution needed. Grateful as we are for the wide dissemination of printed matter, we must recognize that it has not been an unmixed blessing. It can hardly be questioned that the prevalent modern practice of private silent reading deprives us of many values that our forefathers enjoyed—values social, cultural, and spiritual, as well as educational. Sound instruction in elocution can help us to regain them.

Before we go on to a more detailed consideration of these values, the word *elocution* may need definition. We inherit it from the Romans, for whom it meant setting forth one's thoughts in words. For many centuries it was synonymous with *style*, but by the middle of the eighteenth century it had come to mean "the right management of the voice in reading and speaking."² The excesses of the popular public readers of the nineteenth century, their low taste and vulgar exhibitionism, gave the word a bad reputation; but since that reputation is fading today there should be no objection to bringing the word back into good society, for we need it. It is the only word we have to describe the movement of the voice in relation to meaning: the proper management of emphasis, pause, word grouping, inflection, intonation, and various other subtler and more elusive elements of the speech pattern by which a speaker's meaning is clearly perceived by his hearers. Unlike *interpretation*, it applies both to the utterance of our own thoughts in spontaneous talk and to our vocal expression of what we find on the printed page.

Elocution as thus defined is surely one of the "fundamentals" of good speech, often more important in communication than a pleasing voice, accurate pronunciation, or effective bodily behavior, and we shall give it first place in this study of oral reading. It is to be hoped that proper attention to it will improve the student's skill in silent, as well as oral, reading, for it requires a clear comprehension of what is read, a sharp discrimination of grammatical and logical values, and a keen critical sense.

² See John Mason, *An Essay on Elocution or Pronunciation* (London: 1748), a book that may be said to mark the beginning of the elocutionary movement.

Educational advantages of oral reading. Many schools today do not emphasize oral reading in early education. As soon as the child has learned to pronounce words, and is beginning to get some meaning from print, he is encouraged to read his lessons silently. The reading processes are driven underground where they cannot be observed and corrected. The greater part of our reading in everyday practical life will always be silent, and it is impossible to exaggerate the importance of it. But an exclusive attention to silent reading involves some sacrifice, for it is only by reading aloud that we can get a real understanding of the structure of language. Only if we have to make their meaning clear to a critical audience do we fully appreciate the sometimes intricate interrelationships of the parts of a sentence—of modification and subordination, of balance and contrast.

Silent reading encourages speed, but it also encourages superficiality. It is indeed a great advantage to have the quickness of mind and of eye which enables us to read rapidly when we are reading chiefly for information. But oral reading must be deliberate if it is to be intelligible to our hearers, and most literature is not intended for rapid reading. It is meant to be lingered over and enjoyed; it has subtleties that will not be discovered in a hasty perusal. If we are to read the solid and enduring books that require thorough mastication, those that Francis Bacon said are to be chewed and digested, we must take time. A modern teacher of literature gives his students this sound advice: "Read aloud; read slowly; read suspiciously. Reread."³

Some students have suffered in their earlier years from being introduced to literature that was beyond their capacity at the time, such as the writings of Shakespeare and Milton. They have been baffled by the strange vocabulary and unusual word order, and have struggled along only half understanding the text until they became resigned and habituated to a merely partial grasp of what they read. No habit could be formed more deadly to intelligence and growth. As Professor John Dewey says, "We are very easily trained to be content with a minimum of meaning, and fail to note how restricted is our perception of the relations which confer significance. We get so thoroughly used to a kind of pseudo-idea, a half perception, that

³ Lane Cooper, *Two Views of Education* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922), p. 118.

we are not aware how half-dead our mental action is." ⁴ We are all loath to take the time and trouble necessary to investigate strange words. Seldom will a student reading Hamlet's soliloquy take pains to get a sharp and clear impression from such terms as *slings and arrows of outrageous fortune*, *shuffle off this mortal coil*, *bare bodkin*, and *the native hue of resolution*. We could all profit from the experience of the old Roman teacher Quintilian, who believed that the one important precept in teaching a boy to read was, "Let him understand what he reads." ⁵

There is a good deal of complaint today that college students do not know how to read. Teachers of science, of history, and literature find that students do not understand their reading assignments, that they cannot solve a problem because they do not grasp the statement of it, that an abstract presentation of an ethical, political, or economic doctrine may baffle an entire class, that students are helpless and unresponsive when confronted with a brilliant passage of imaginative literature. There may be many causes for this lack of proficiency in reading, but there is every reason to believe that these deficiencies can be greatly ameliorated by practice in reading aloud under the direction of a competent elocutionist.

Occasions for oral reading. The need for improvement in silent reading would alone justify a re-emphasis on the study of oral reading, but oral reading deserves study for its own sake, since in modern times only a hermit can escape the need or the opportunity for reading to others. In spite of the easy availability of printed matter and the vogue of private reading, there are many occasions in all our lives when we may, or must, read aloud. Life for most Americans would hardly be livable if there were no meetings to attend; and rare indeed is the meeting at which there is not some reading of minutes, reports, resolutions, recommendations, and other communications. In churches, the Bible, the ritual, hymns, and announcements are read, the congregation often participating in the ritual. It has become the fashion in recent times for public men to read their speeches, and few are so bold as to face an audience without a manuscript before them. On the radio it is the established procedure for announcers, commentators, speakers, and actors to

⁴ John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1916), p. 168.

⁵ Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* i. 8.

read from a script. In the classroom nearly every teacher has frequent occasion to read to his pupils, and it is important that he read well. Especially should the teacher of literature be a good reader, for upon his interpretations will depend largely the literary taste of his pupils. His example—in voice, pronunciation, melody, and feeling—may make or mar their standards of fine speech and fine literature. Training in oral reading should be a vital part of every English teacher's preparation.

Reading in the home. If this is true of the teacher of literature, and to some extent of all teachers, how much more is it true of the mothers and fathers whose occasional reading to their children will set for life their habits of speech and their literary taste. Speech habits are formed in childhood. Patterns of pronunciation, voice, and vocal expression are passed down from parent to child, and can only with great difficulty be changed in later life. Fortunate is the child whose early taste was formed and nurtured by parents who spoke the language with beauty and understanding. We know that Ruskin's fine feeling for words was due largely to parental example, for he records that as a child he was privileged to listen, if he chose, while his father read to his mother "Shakespeare, Pope, Spenser, Byron, Scott, Goldsmith, Addison, Johnson. . . . Mother made me know," he says, "as soon as I could speak plain, what I have in all later years tried to enforce on my readers, that accuracy of diction means accuracy of sensation, and *precision of accent, precision of feeling*."⁶

A modern poet has given eloquent tribute to the beauty of speech learned at her mother's knee:

My mother has the prettiest tricks
Of words and words and words.
Her talk comes out as smooth and sleek
As breasts of singing birds.

She shapes her speech all silver fine
Because she loves it so.
And her own eyes begin to shine
To hear her stories grow. . . .

God wove a web of loveliness,
Of clouds and stars and birds,

⁶ *Praeterita*, I. vii.

But made not any thing at all
So beautiful as words. . . .

They are as fair as bloom or air,
They shine like any star,
And I am rich who learned from her
How beautiful they are.⁷

Reading to others. Among groups of friends, as well as in the home circle, there is a place for quiet, sympathetic oral reading of good literature. Among literary people, both on and off the campus, such sessions often compete successfully against the allurements of gossip and bridge. Mr. Charles Laughton, the distinguished motion picture actor, has recently lent his voice and his example to the encouragement of such reading. "I plead for more reading aloud," he says. "It is a friendly, quiet and thoroughly refreshing thing to do. It makes us participants rather than spectators. Instead of sitting by to let the professionals amuse or enlighten us, *we* can get into the act, make contact with new ideas, exercise our imaginations.

"More than that, it is a shared experience which draws people closer together. Husbands and wives, families or groups of friends can enjoy the comfortable satisfaction that comes from laughing together, learning together—from doing the same thing at the same time, together."⁸

Mr. Laughton recommends that in such sessions we read naturally, with our "home-grown accents," and without cultivating an affected, ~~stagey~~ stagey voice. This caution is needed, and especially by those who engage in *public* recitation. It was the artificiality and affectation of public readers that gave elocution such a bad name some fifty years ago. Said the late Edward Dowden, "Few persons nowadays seem to feel how powerful an instrument of culture may be found in modest, intelligent, and sympathetic reading aloud. The reciter and the elocutionist of late have done much to rob us of this which is one of the finest of the arts. A mongrel something which, at least with the inferior adepts, is neither good reading nor yet veritable acting, but which sets agape the half-educated with the wonder of its airs and attitudinising, its pseudo-heroics and pseudo-pathos, has usurped the place of the true art of reading

⁷ Anna Hemstead Branch, "Songs for My Mother," from *The Shoe That Danced*, by permission of Houghton Mifflin Co., publishers.

⁸ "Read It Out Loud," *This Week Magazine*, November 18, 1950.

aloud, and has made the word 'recitation' a terror to quiet folk who are content with intelligence and refinement."⁹

John Masefield, an ardent champion of the public recitation of poetry, also deplors the harm done, especially to child reciters, by the elocutionists, who, he says, "have made a child in a pinafore on prize-day a thing that strong men fly from screaming."¹⁰

And it is well to recall that one of the reasons why Plato would have excluded poets from his ideal republic was because of the vulgarity of their public readings. There is a type of character, he said, "who will narrate anything; . . . nothing will be too bad for him: and he will be ready to imitate anything, not as a joke, but in right good earnest, and before a large company. . . . He will attempt to represent the roll of thunder, the noise of wind and hail, or the creaking of wheels, and pulleys, and the various sounds of flutes, pipes, trumpets, and all sorts of instruments: he will bark like a dog, bleat like a sheep, or crow like a cock; his entire art will consist of imitation of voice and gesture."¹¹

Many of us have encountered such parlor entertainers, and we may have been amused by them, for we are much more tolerant of such antics than the austere Plato. But we are not preparing to be professional comedians; we are preparing rather for the hours of leisure suitable to people of culture and refinement, and the audiences before whom we aspire to read will scarcely tolerate such excessive exhibitionism as these eminent men have described. We can read in public without yielding to the temptation to play the clown or to exhibit our powers of mimicry. And while bringing enjoyment to our listeners we are acquiring certain benefits for ourselves. Francis Bacon, though he looked upon acting as a disreputable profession, recommended practice in acting as a discipline for youth. "It strengthens the memory," he said, "regulates the tone of the voice and the efficacy of pronunciation; gracefully composes the countenance and the gesture; procures a becoming degree of assurance; and lastly, accustoms youth to the eye of men."¹² These are advantages to be derived also from public reading, and they help to make it a highly desirable accomplishment; for while the reader

⁹ *New Studies in Literature* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1895), p. 431.

¹⁰ John Masefield, *With the Living Voice* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1925), p. 19.

¹¹ *Republic* iii.

¹² *Advancement of Learning*, Book VI, chap. iv.

gives pleasure or instruction to others he develops what is sometimes called his "speech personality" and prepares himself for better social adjustment.

Accuracy of observation. The process of preparation for oral reading brings additional benefits. "Fine elocution," said Ruskin, "means an exquisitely close attention to, and intelligence of, the meaning of words, and perfect sympathy with what feeling they describe." The reading course encourages this "exquisitely close attention to words," which is the foundation of nearly all study. Adequate comprehension *requires* accuracy of observation. No thorough understanding of any object can be got from a bird's-eye view. One does not become acquainted with a country by flying over it in an airplane, and mere airplane reading of the printed page will not satisfy the requirements of the elocution class. If you are required to deliver to a listener all the meaning in a sentence, you must observe closely what the sentence says. Take, for instance, this sentence:

The Ancients, like most Orientals today, seem to have spoken only when they had something to say.

If you are careless, you may imply by your reading of the phrase "like most Orientals today" that the Ancients were Orientals, or that they are living today, or both. In reading aloud, such mental lapses are at once revealed. That is why we often read a difficult passage aloud to discover its meaning. The first direction of the reading teacher shall be "Observe!" (See "The First Rule of Study," p. 50.)

Whether the habit of close observation developed in a reading course can be transferred to other activities is a question; but if it can, then elocution must be the most valuable of all disciplines, for close observation is fundamental to all artistic and scientific method. Let us note, for example, the emphasis placed upon it by the great naturalist Louis Agassiz. To an eager student who came to study in his laboratory in Cambridge he assigned a vile-smelling preserved fish, with the brief injunction that he should study it (without damaging it), then paid no more attention to his pupil that day, nor the next, *nor for a week!* At the end of a week he called for a report, and when it was given, sent the student back to his task with

the brief comment "That is not right." At the end of another week of ten hours a day, the student had really learned something about the fish, enough to astonish himself and satisfy his teacher. Agassiz's method was severe, but his pupil learned the all-important lesson of close observation.

One of the surest marks of mediocrity in any student is a certain dullness of perception, an imperfect understanding of ideas, a vagueness of emotional impression, and a general mental flabbiness, which, in book studies, seem to have their roots in the failure to read with understanding. On the other hand, the surest mark of excellence, in art or science, in business or the professions, and the certain mark of genius, is a vivid sharpness of perception and a corresponding definiteness of impression. The reading class affords an unrivaled opportunity for the detection of mediocrity and the stimulation of clear-headedness. An exercise in elocution under a competent teacher is an almost infallible intelligence test.

Literary criticism. Elocution, by requiring close attention to the structure and meaning of sentences, lays the foundation for aptitude in literary criticism. The analysis necessary for oral reading reveals an author's weaknesses of structure, infelicities of wording, and vagueness of expression, as it reveals also his virtues and his distinguishing characteristics. Until students come to the oral reading class they frequently have no exact criteria for their likes and dislikes in poetry or prose style, but base their sometimes dogmatic judgments on vague irrational prejudices. When a poem must be interpreted to others, we find that its strengths and its weaknesses are at once revealed, so that proper training in oral reading becomes the soundest kind of preparation for literary criticism. Besides, if good models are studied, and studied as thoroughly as they should be—that is, until memorized—the form and feel of good style will be impressed permanently upon the student's mind.

Skill in writing. Such intimate acquaintance with models of good writing helps toward increased skill in English composition. By assimilating and memorizing good prose the reader stamps its form and pattern upon his mind and builds them into his habits of expression.

Our vocabularies, of course, are made up of words we have heard and read; we do not invent words. To some extent our *word pat-*

terns also are those that we have heard or read. We do indeed sometimes create new combinations of words, and it is this invention which the composition teacher seeks to encourage, but we will be much more fertile in invention if our minds are stored with the best patterns of composition. Oral reading enriches our speech with new patterns of expression as well as with new words, and any new words thus acquired will be not merely eye words, as are those acquired by silent reading, but ear words—words that we know the sound and the use of and will readily adopt into our permanent vocabularies.

Better conversation. The study of oral reading is valuable also in brightening the pattern of daily conversation. Americans in general do not converse with vivacity and originality. Our thoughts are often dull and commonplace, and our voices lack color and charm. Attempts to teach better conversation in school have generally not succeeded because informal talk is evanescent and cannot be pinned down and studied. But the reading class can improve vocal expression by working on the fixed sentences set up for study; and these more colorful patterns of speech will probably be, in part at least, transferred to daily conversation. And the exercises provided in this book supply lively matter for conversation.

Voice and pronunciation. Our study is not concerned primarily with improvement in voice and pronunciation, but these aspects of speech are nevertheless bound to receive some attention. Students rarely realize how bad their voices are until they are called upon to express the beauties of good literature. Then the harsh, the pinched, the flabby qualities are exposed, weakness and thinness are made evident, and a motive is furnished for improvement. Pronunciation, too, must of necessity receive careful attention in the reading class. In such a class every student frequently encounters words that he has not met before, and nearly every student meets words that he thinks he knows, but really doesn't. Since it is a cardinal sin in a well-conducted class for the student to mispronounce a word in a passage assigned for study, and since so much of the value of literature lies in the sounds of words, he acquires a new respect for his language, its sounds, melodies, and rhythms.

Appreciation of poetry. But perhaps the chief value of oral reading is that it is the best, if not the only, method of teaching

appreciation of poetry. The ultimate aim of this book is to teach appreciation of poetry and skill in communicating it to others.

Until very recently all poetry was meant to be sung or spoken, and in early times it was composed orally and not written down at all. A part of the very essence of poetry is its sound. To be appreciated it must be spoken with the living voice, not merely read silently from cold type. "As a substitute for the classic lyre or romantic harp," Wordsworth required for his poetry "an animated or impassioned recitation, adapted to the subject."¹³ Professor Cooper says that "every bit of literature properly so called that history has to show is intended, not for the eye primarily, but for the ear. Every line of Shakespeare, every line of Milton, is meant to be pronounced, cannot be duly appreciated until it is pronounced."¹⁴ Oral reading furnishes a sound training in appreciation of poetry. An understanding of the allusions to classical mythology in Milton's "L'Allegro," and an ability to retell the content of the poem, do not demonstrate appreciation, though they are necessary to it. Appreciation is a "spiritual" matter. Its presence, or absence, is almost infallibly revealed by reading aloud.

Our concern for appreciation is not, of course, confined to lyric poetry; it extends also to dramatic poetry, and to prose fiction and drama. The value of reading aloud as training for acting is self-evident, for surely the most important thing an actor has to do is to read his lines intelligently. Practice in reading should also furnish a basis for sound criticism of acting and enable students to listen more critically in the theatre.

Summary. We have considered the flood of cheap printed matter which engulfs us, and the need to counteract the attendant cultural losses by a revival of elocutionary training. We have noted that the low level of reading ability among college students may be traceable to certain defects in their early schooling: the insistence upon silent reading, the obsession with speed, and the too early acquaintance with mature literature. And we have examined the occasions for oral reading, and outlined the benefits to be expected from training in reading aloud: better comprehension, the habit of close observation, proficiency in literary criticism, better writing,

¹³ Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, 1815.

¹⁴ Lane Cooper, *Two Views of Education* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922), p. 115.

better conversation, and genuine appreciation of poetry. We shall proceed now to study how thoughts and feelings expressed in language may be apprehended and communicated orally to others.

EXERCISES

1. Explain the meaning of the following well-worn phrases from familiar literature. Try to rephrase each without using the words of the original.
 - a) Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored.
Julia Ward Howe, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."
 - b) Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
"Life is but an empty dream!"
Henry W. Longfellow, "A Psalm of Life."
 - c. They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude.
William Wordsworth, "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud."
 - d) He prepareth a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.
Psalm 23.
 - e) The quality of mercy is not strain'd;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath.
William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*.
 - f) And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.
Francis Scott Key, "The Star Spangled Banner."
 - g) And join with thee calm Peace and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet.
John Milton, "Il Penseroso."
 - h) When I have fears that I may cease to be
Before my pen has glean'd my teeming brain.
John Keats, "When I Have Fears."
 - i) And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.
William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*.
2. Try your powers of comprehension on the following involved sentences. Read them aloud.
 - a) I shall observe, in passing, that it seems not so much from any essential distinction in the faculty of the two poets, or in the nature

of the objects contemplated by either, as in the more immediate adaptability of these objects to the distinct purpose of each, that the objective poet, in his appeal to the aggregate human mind, chooses to deal with the doings of men (the result of which dealing, in its pure form, when even description, as suggesting a describer, is dispensed with, is what we call dramatic poetry); while the subjective poet, whose study has been himself, appealing through himself to the absolute Divine mind, prefers to dwell upon those external scenic appearances which strike out most abundantly and uninterruptedly his inner light and power, selects that silence of the earth and sea in which he can best hear the beating of his individual heart, and leaves the noisy, complex, yet imperfect exhibitions of nature in the manifold experience of man around him, which serve only to distract and suppress the working of his brain. Robert Browning, *Essay on Shelley*.

- b) But here the main skill and groundwork will be to temper them such lectures and explanations upon every opportunity as may lead and draw them in willing obedience, inflamed with the study of learning and the admiration of virtue, stirred up with high hopes of living to be brave men and worthy patriots, dear to God and famous to all ages: that they may despise and scorn all their childish and ill-taught qualities, to delight in manly and liberal exercises; which he who hath the art and proper eloquence to catch them with, what with mild and effectual persuasions, and what with the intimation of some fear, if need be, but chiefly by his own example, might in a short space gain them to an incredible diligence and courage, infusing into their young breasts such an ingenuous and noble ardour as would not fail to make many of them renowned and matchless men. John Milton, *On Education*.
- c) The Company, in consideration of the warranties herein contained, and of the cash premium and the policy fee, and subject to the limits, exceptions, exclusions, special provisions, general conditions and form of coverage elected by the insured as hereinafter set forth, does hereby insure the insured named and described in the schedule of warranties, which schedule is material and which the insured by the acceptance of this policy warrants to be true, against loss by reason of the liability imposed by law upon the named insured for damage on account of bodily injuries accidentally suffered or alleged to have been suffered, while this policy is in force, including death resulting at any time therefrom by any person or persons not employed by the named insured or his spouse by reason of the operation or use by the named insured or his spouse, of any private passenger motor vehicle loaned to or driven by such named insured or his spouse, but not owned, hired, or leased by the named insured or his spouse. An Accident Insurance Policy.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What are the losses and what are the gains from the easy availability of printed matter in modern times?
2. What is the true meaning of the word *elocution*? Distinguish between *elocution* and *interpretation*.
3. Why should every adult be able to read well aloud?
4. To what extent is oral reading a test of intelligence?
5. What may elocutionary training contribute to skill in writing? In conversation?
6. What may it contribute to literary appreciation?

Chapter 2

MEANING

SKILL in reading aloud is no mean or easy accomplishment. It requires that we be able to grasp the meaning of written language with facility and accuracy, digest it thoroughly and make it our own, and utter it with such clarity and distinction that others will readily receive it and appreciate it.

How is such skill to be acquired?

Methods of teaching elocution. Various methods of teaching oral reading have been used since early times, and are still used. First, one may learn to read a given passage after a fashion, by merely imitating someone else's reading of it. Secondly, one may have a teacher tell him just how his voice should behave in uttering each phrase. Thirdly, one may formulate and practice rules of vocal expression that tell what words to emphasize, when to pause, what intonation is called for, and so on. Fourthly, one may merely follow his own natural habits of expression, reading sentences composed by others as if they were his own.

The first two of these methods do not require much intelligence; they do not demand that the reader understand what he reads, and whatever may be learned by them is seldom transferred to other passages than the one being studied. We shall deal chiefly with the fourth method, though giving some attention to the others.

The plan of this book. We shall begin with the analysis of thought as expressed in language, practicing on a relatively cold prose that is uncomplicated by imaginative and emotional overtones. Then, after some attention to voice, pronunciation, and

metrics, we shall take up the study of lyrical and narrative poetry. Finally, we shall deal with impersonation and dramatic poetry. The basic aim throughout our study is the development of *adequate mental and emotional responsiveness to the meaning of literature, and skill in communicating it to others.*

The meaning of natural expression. We commonly praise speech that impresses us as natural, and we disapprove what is affected or artificial, but we are often not sure just what we mean by the term *natural*. Infants apparently have an instinct to express themselves, but it is not instinctive for them to speak any particular language. Speaking a language is not natural, but learned. We acquire our speech from those with whom we grow up, and in maturity it is natural for us to speak as we have become accustomed to speak. Custom is a kind of second nature, but we should not speak naturally in this sense unless our habits of utterance conform with the habits of those who may be considered the conservers of the best traditions of our language. These are people of intelligence and culture who have lived and traveled among various English-speaking groups, and so are free from the localisms and provincialisms of single communities. Our usual manner of speaking cannot be defended merely because it seems natural to us. We must try to conform to what is standard in expression. For we read to communicate thought, and we shall not be understood by the average person unless our utterance conforms to average, or normal, speech. A large part of our study, then, must be an examination of the patterns of normal speech. Unfortunately, an adequate body of rules and principles for such speech has not yet been formulated, and we shall have to depend to some extent upon our own observation of the best models.

Conversation as the norm. The early elocutionists were convinced that the proper model for good reading was lively conversation. They observed that reading in the churches, in the law courts, and elsewhere, was flat, colorless, and artificial—far inferior to utterance by the same persons in earnest talk. Apparently the past two hundred years of elocutionary teaching has not improved the quality of public reading, for we still find that the reading of even the most highly cultivated people falls far below their conversation in liveliness, expressiveness, and interest. The main difference is that

conversation sounds more "real." It has a ring of genuineness, or normality, that reading lacks. It is more likely to be free from artificiality and self-consciousness. The reader may assume certain tones and inflections which, for some mysterious reason, or for no reason, he thinks are characteristic of reading. Or he may allow the normal cadences of the voice to be flattened out into a dull and artificial monotone. As we listen to a voice from the radio or from the next room, there is seldom any doubt as to whether the speaker is reading or conversing, and there is seldom any doubt as to which form of communication is superior.

How can we learn to make our reading sound like good lively talk? In conversing, we utter thoughts just as they are created in the mind. They come forth with the marks of creation fresh upon them. In reading, on the other hand, we receive through the eye certain impressions from printed characters on the page, and transform them by some chemistry of the brain into vocal sounds. This may become a quite mechanical process; that is, the machinery may be set in motion that transforms printed words into spoken words, and we may withdraw our attention from it and occupy our minds elsewhere. Even in reciting from memory it is possible to start the machinery that takes a string of words out of our mental storehouse and transforms them into speech, and then transfer our attention to something else while the mechanism runs on automatically. A little girl reciting a "piece" in Sunday school will usually have her mind anywhere except on what she is saying. She may be admiring her new dress, or watching the grimaces of the neighborhood bad boy, or just enjoying the sensation of being in the limelight. This little-girl-recitation attitude survives into our maturity, and it is what causes so much reading to lack the illusion of reality.

The cure is obvious. We must do in reading what we do in conversing. We must have the same mental activity in the one as in the other. As our minds create the thoughts we utter in conversing, so they must re-create the thoughts we utter in reading. We must have a vivid, intense realization of the meaning of what we read *while we are reading it*. This is not merely to say that we should know the meaning of what we read. We may understand thoroughly the meaning of the Lord's Prayer and yet recite it with our minds on the Sunday dinner waiting at home. If reading is to sound real, the mind must be present. The chief cause of unreality in

reading is absent-mindedness. If, then, a reader understands what he is speaking, and if he keeps his mind earnestly occupied with meaning, elocution will pretty well take care of itself. In general, we may say that vocal expression is an exact index of what is going on in the mind. If the mind is dominated by strong emotion, embarrassment, or fatigue, meaning may be obscured; but the voice will still reveal the mental state. Only when we deliberately attempt to deceive our hearers is it possible, if we are skilled in deception, for outward expression to conceal our inner state.

Communication. A second characteristic of conversational speech, as Professor Winans has so well defined it,¹ is that the speaker displays a "lively sense of communication." He is interested in his audience, looks at them, talks to them. This is as important in oral reading as in public speaking. The reader should manage his book or manuscript in such a way as to indicate that it contains something that he wishes to share with his audience. His attention should be divided between book and hearers. He should seem to be saying not merely "I like this" but "I want you to like it too." His book should never be a barrier between him and his listeners. His manner should never (with rare exceptions) be indifferent, impersonal, or aloof. Nor should it be declamatory—as if he were addressing the rafters or the stars. For the kind of reading we are concerned with, it should be warm, personal, and direct, indicating that the reader is interested in what he is doing, enjoys it, and is eager that his hearers receive what he says and appreciate it.

Symbolization of meaning. Meaning can be conveyed from one person to another only when the symbols of communication are mutually understood. In oral reading three parties are involved: first, the writer, who reduces his thought to written symbols; secondly, the reader, who translates written into oral symbols; thirdly, the hearer, who from the heard oral symbols re-creates out of his own past experience the author's thought. It is important to note that we read only with our own experiences, that thought is not transferred directly from mind to mind, as coal may be shoveled from one bin to another, but that a writer's thought reduced to

¹ See James Albert Winans, *Speech-Making* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.), 1938, chaps. ii and xx.

printed symbols, sets off in the reader's mind a set of reactions or impressions which, since they are dependent upon his own past experience, may not be the same as those originally in the writer's mind. But too much emphasis may easily be laid upon this truth. It is evident that we generally read an author, not that he may stir up in us, or in our hearers, original thoughts, but that we may get for ourselves and communicate to others, *his* thought. It is possible to understand and communicate the thought and feeling of a writer only because the symbols he uses mean the same to us and to our hearers as to him.

Words as symbols. We call a word a symbol whether it is written or printed or spoken, for we have learned to get the same meaning from a word whether we see it or hear it. The real word is not the black characters on the page, or the sound waves by means of which it travels to our ears. The real word is, as Plato taught, "graven in the soul"; it is a living word, "of which the written word is properly no more than an image." It is this living word, this inner meaning, that we strive to communicate, whatever its symbol may be. Let us take the number "five." Whether we call it *fünf* or *cinq*, or write it in Arabic or Roman numerals, it means the same to us as to a German or a Frenchman, or an ancient Arabian or Roman. For these real words or ideas we have one or more symbols, written or spoken, which all cultivated people understand, symbols which make up that conventional means of expression which we call language.

It is true, of course, that a word or its symbol may change. It may grow from age to age, and it may be modified by its context. "A word," said Justice Holmes, "is not a crystal, transparent and unchangeable; it is the skin of a living thought, and may vary greatly in color and content according to the circumstances and the time in which it is used." But in any time or context it has a more or less conventional meaning which we must understand if we are to hold intercourse with others.

In this symbolical character of language lies one great danger for the reader—the danger that words may become merely symbols, completely divorced from meaning. "It is customary," says Professor Dewey, "for teachers to urge children to read with expression, so as to bring out the meaning. But if they originally learned the

sensory-motor technique of reading—the ability to identify forms and to reproduce the sounds they stand for—by methods which did not call for attention to meaning, a mechanical habit was established which makes it difficult to read subsequently with intelligence. The vocal organs have been trained to go their own way automatically in isolation; and meaning cannot be tied on at will.”² If you have been so unfortunate as to acquire such habits in reading you may have a hard struggle to break them, but the attempt must be made. So long as your reading is a mere naming of symbols, the path to mental growth is barred. “Adults and children alike,” says Professor Dewey again, “are capable of using even precise verbal formulae with only the vaguest and most confused sense of what they mean. Genuine ignorance is more profitable because likely to be accompanied by humility, curiosity, and open-mindedness; while ability to repeat catch-phrases, cant terms, familiar propositions, gives the conceit of learning and coats the mind with a varnish waterproof to new ideas.”³

It is likely that many of us will need to begin our study of reading with some kind of mental varnish-remover, for we must, as Ruskin said, “get into the habit of looking intensely at words, and assuring ourselves of their meaning, syllable by syllable—nay, letter by letter.”

The study of words. Turn now to Ruskin’s advice in the selection at the end of this chapter. We shall use this selection as our first practice-exercise. Read it through carefully, studying the words as Ruskin directs. You will need, of course, a good dictionary, one that gives complete etymologies. Investigate the ancestry and family connections of *authoritatively*, *intensely*, *illiterate*, *uneducated*, *accuracy*, *peerage*, *canaille*, *noblesse*, *parliament*, etc. If you look up the word *canaille*, for instance, you will find that it means “rabble.” But you will get a finer appreciation of it if you learn that it is a cousin of our word *canine*, and that both come from a Latin root meaning “dog.” *Canaille*, then, is a pack of curs. If you investigate the family connections of *illiterate* you will learn its relationship here to the phrase *letter by letter* above it, and possibly dis-

² John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1916), p. 167.

³ John Dewey, *How We Think* (New York: D. C. Heath & Co., 1910), p. 176.

cover why Ruskin encloses it in quotation marks. In reading this sentence try to express vocally what Ruskin indicated to the eye by his quotation marks. And if you will find out what the British Museum is, you will not, I hope, read the clause "but if you read ten pages of a good book" in such a way as to imply that this great British library is stocked only with *bad* books.

You must make it a practice to stop at every word that is either new or stale, and work your way back to the significant reality for which it stands. Only when you master verbal meanings can you begin to be truly educated, and only thus can you read with intelligent expression.

Note also Ruskin's statement that "a false accent . . . is enough, in the parliament of any civilized nation, to assign to a man a certain degree of inferior standing for ever." The statement is perhaps less true of the American Congress than of other parliamentary bodies, but it is nevertheless somewhat true here. Some years ago a candidate for the presidency undoubtedly lost many votes because he rhymed *first* with *hoist*, and the first syllable of *radio* with *had*. For college students, and especially for those studying oral reading, any carelessness in the pronunciation of words is beyond pardon.

It is never safe to guess at pronunciations. You should make prompt and thorough investigation of every word about which there exists the least doubt, and if you do not have doubts about words of which your pronunciation is irregular, you must be either tone-deaf, or hopelessly unobservant. Note in this selection the number of syllables in *authoritatively*, the sound of *u* in *accuracy*, the third syllable of *difference*, the accentuation of *entire* and *museum*, the number of syllables in *parliament*, and, of course, the pronunciation of *canaille* and *noblesse*.

Grouping. It is likely that primitive man's first employment of speech was in sentence-words. He said "Go" or "Come" or "Beware," where we now use a phrase of several words, but with very little additional meaning. In the command, "Please leave the room at once," we use six words to express a single idea, an idea that might be expressed by a gesture, or by the single word "go." The same is true of such ideas as "Come to the window," "How beautiful are the stars tonight," or "Isn't it time we were going to dinner?" The units of thought as we find it expressed in conventional lan-

guage are not the separate words of which phrases are composed. The unit of thought is the phrase or word-group itself. When we think of the meaning of the statement, "A well educated gentleman may not know many languages," we do not think of "a," then of "well," and then of "educated," etc. We think of "A-well-educated-gentleman," and then of the assertion that he "may-not-know-many-languages." Thought does not proceed by means of a uniform succession of words; it proceeds by word-groups.

When we are creating thought as we go along, as in conversation, we generally make the grouping clear to our hearers, that is, make our ideas distinct. In reading from the printed page, our eyes must be trained to run quickly along the succession of words and organize them into proper groups before the voice attempts to utter them. If the voice fails to communicate this grouping to one's hearers, it fails to communicate meaning, for meaning lies in the grouping. Just as in written language we group letters into words, and separate these words from each other, so in spoken language we should group words together and separate the groups from each other. If we fail to do so, we throw upon our hearers the burden of sorting our words apart, a task as difficult as sorting out the words from an unspaced sentence in print, such as this:

Nowhereisasentencehardtoread.

And if we make a false grouping, we falsify or destroy meaning.

Serious ambiguities and misunderstandings may arise from faulty grouping of words. For instance, on the night before an important holiday a bungling radio announcer gave the weather forecast as follows:

Showers tonight, tomorrow—
Clearing in the north—
And central portion with occasional showers—
And warmer in the south.

If you had been planning a picnic, would you have known what to prepare for? Try to read the announcement so that it means what it was intended to mean.

Each of the following sentences may have two meanings, depending upon how the words are grouped, though each meaning is expressed by the same words in exactly the same order. Some of the

groups make silly results, but they may easily be fallen into by a reader who is not alert.

1. a) "You hope," she said, "too much."
b) You hope she said too much.
2. a) A man called, while you were out, to lunch with your wife.
b) A man called, while you were out to lunch with your wife.
3. a) I should like to go, by climbing a birch tree.
b) I should like to go by, climbing a birch tree.
4. a) The teacher says the principal is a fool.
b) "The teacher," says the principal, "is a fool."
5. a) Moses was the daughter-of-Pharaoh's son.
b) Moses was the daughter—of Pharaoh's son.
6. a) Woman! Without her, man would be a savage.
b) Woman without her man—would be a savage.
7. a) A man going to sea—his wife requests the prayers of the church.
b) A man going to see his wife—requests the prayers of the church.
8. a) What do you think! I will let you drive my new car!
b) What! Do you think I will let you drive my new car!

As further evidence of the necessity of proper grouping note the following sentences. Some of them are difficult, but their meaning will become clear when you discover the correct grouping. And it will not be clear *until* your grouping is right. In written sentences the proper grouping is generally, but not always, indicated by punctuation. In these sentences the original punctuation marks have been omitted so as to provide a greater test of your powers of comprehension. Read the sentences aloud.

1. Dire was the tossing deep the groans, despair
Tended the sick busiest from couch to couch.

John Milton.

2. Get place and wealth if possible with grace
If not by any means get wealth and place.

Alexander Pope.

3. We believe that to do is a greater evil than to suffer injustice
and not to be punished than to be punished. Plato.

4. Accuracy of diction means accuracy of sensation and precision of accent precision of feeling. John Ruskin.
5. Mean men admire wealth great men glory. Francis Bacon.
6. Books are the best of things well used abused among the worst. Ralph Waldo Emerson.
7. Histories make men wise poets witty the mathematics subtle natural philosophy deep moral grave logic and rhetoric able to contend. Francis Bacon.
8. But when these words are taken as signifying what we have above defined and matter is understood as emotivity not aesthetically elaborated that is to say impressions and form elaboration intellectual activity and expression then our meaning cannot be doubtful. Benedetto Croce. (Matter and form are being compared.)
9. That that that that that man saw is this is obvious.
10. That that is is that that is not is not.
11. John, where Charles had had had had had had had had had had had the teacher's approval.

Grouping in verse. The problem of grouping in verse is essentially the same as in prose. Grouping must be governed by the thought, not by the line length. It would be convenient for the reader if the two agreed, but they seldom do. Some modern poets apparently believe that grouping should be made as difficult as possible for the reader, for they omit punctuation marks and terminate their lines at unexpected and irrational places. Try to read these extracts from two poems by Archibald MacLeish:

Girl do you think ever
 Waking stretching your small
 Arms your back arched
 Your long legs straight
 Out your mouth red
 Round in a pout in a half
 Yawn half smile ⁴

Between the mutinous brave burning of the leaves
 And winter's covering of our hearts with his deep snow

⁴ From "Excavation of Troy," *Act Five and Other Poems*, by permission of Random House, Inc., publishers.

We are alone there are no evening birds we know
 The naked moon the tame stars circle at our eaves ⁵

The unknown author of the following "Ambiguous Lines" intended them to be read with a comma in each line. Note what a difference this grouping makes.

I saw a peacock with a fiery tail
 I saw a blazing comet pour down hail
 I saw a cloud all wrapt with ivy round
 I saw a lofty oak creep on the ground
 I saw a beetle swallow up a whale
 I saw a foaming sea brimful of ale
 I saw a pewter cup sixteen feet deep
 I saw a well full of men's tears that weep
 I saw wet eyes in flames of living fire
 I saw a house as high as the moon and higher
 I saw the glorious sun at deep midnight
 I saw the man who saw this wondrous sight.

I saw a pack of cards gnawing a bone
 I saw a dog seated on Britain's throne
 I saw King George shut up within a box
 I saw an orange driving a fat ox
 I saw a butcher not a twelvemonth old
 I saw a great-coat all of solid gold
 I saw two buttons telling of their dreams
 I saw my friends who wished I'd quit these themes.

Or note Peter Quince's Prologue from Act V of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:

If we offend, it is with our good will.
 That you should think, we come not to offend,
 But with good will. To show our simple skill,
 That is the true beginning of our end.
 Consider then we come but in despite.
 We do not come as minding to content you,
 Our true intent is. All for your delight
 We are not here. That you should here repent you,
 The actors are at hand, and by their show
 You shall know all that you are like to know.

⁵ From "Immortal Autumn," *Poems, 1924-1933*, by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers.

The punctuation indicates how Quince spoke it. As Lysander said, "He hath rid his prologue like a rough colt; he knows not the stop. A good moral my lord: it is not enough to speak, but to speak true." See if you can unscramble this passage, and speak it true.

These examples should be enough to demonstrate that a reader cannot grasp meaning unless he sees it in true units of thought, and that he will not make it clear to his hearers if it is not clear in his own mind. It is a requisite of clearness, as Quintilian said,⁶ "*that the phrases be distinct*, that is, that the speaker begin and stop where he ought. He must observe where his words are to be reined in, as it were, and where suspended, . . . and where they are to be altogether brought to a stand. . . . The merit of making proper distinctions [groupings] may perhaps be little; but without it all other merit in speaking would be vain."

Many have admired the skill with which Winston Churchill reads his speeches, but without knowing the pains he takes to facilitate the process. A British newspaper correspondent reports that his speeches are always typed out oversize, with plenty of space. They are not written in sentences and paragraphs, like ordinary copy, but phrase by phrase. On one line there may be only two or three words. Anyone who has an important reading assignment may well follow Churchill's example and type out the phrases on separate lines. Any method is worth trying that helps one to think, and to express himself, in true units of thought.

Variation in grouping. The limits of the groups within a given sentence are not fixed and constant, but may vary with the occasion on which one reads, the intelligence of the listeners, and the purpose of the reader. If audibility is low, if the listeners are immature or dull-witted, or if the reader feels that he should be solemn or impressive, he will go slowly and make his grouping fine. That is, the attendant circumstances will determine whether you should read:

You might read—all the books—in the British Museum—
if you could live long enough,

or deliver this entire passage as two groups. Grouping is related to speed. If it seems desirable to go slowly, speed may be reduced by

⁶ *Institutio oratoria* xi. 3. 35, 39.

making smaller groups and pausing longer between them. This is not to imply, however, that there should always be pauses between groups. The essential thing is that the thought units be perceived by both speaker and hearer, and no mere mechanical pausing will assure this. In the sentence

Whether there are sailors who sail without charts is doubtful.

the phrase "who sail without charts" is certainly a separate thought unit, but there is no need to pause before it. In all such matters we have to depend upon common sense and the conventional idiom of the language. The one thing we must not do is to put together words that belong apart, or separate those that belong together.

Group relations. Besides noting the limits of separate word groups we must observe their relation to each other. The constituent units of a sentence are seldom merely strung together like beads; they are of different sizes and purposes, like the girders of a steel bridge, and bear various relationships to each other. These relationships are an integral part of meaning. Note how puzzling are the following groups when merely enumerated, thus:

A library may be very large—it is in disorder—it is not useful—one that is small—well arranged.

But when the proper connective words are inserted showing their relations to each other, their meaning becomes clear:

A library may be very large; but if it is in disorder, it is not so useful as one that is small but well arranged.

As a further demonstration of the importance of group relations, try to connect these units from the opening of *Paradise Lost* so as to make a meaningful whole:

Man's first disobedience—the fruit of that forbidden tree—mortal taste brought death into the world—all our woe—loss of Eden—one greater Man restore us—regain the blissful seat—sing, Heavenly Muse.

Then turn to page 307 and examine the sentence as Milton wrote it.

These interdependencies among phrases are so various and so complicated that no rule of elocution can be formulated to cover them. If you wish them to be apparent in your voice, you must learn to understand them and hold them in mind as you read.

The most common relationship between word groups is that of principal and subordinate. Most modifying phrases and clauses, and many conditional and parenthetical clauses, are subordinate in importance to main clauses, and so must be given less prominence in reading. Or two word groups may be of equal importance, as in parallelism and balance, or when they express a contrast, a restatement, a reinforcement, or an explanation. Sometimes a series of groups will mount to a climax. Let us look at Ruskin's first sentence. It breaks up into these groups:

I tell you earnestly and authoritatively
 I know I am right in this
 you must get into the habit of looking intensely at words
 and assuring yourself of their meaning
 syllable by syllable
 nay, letter by letter.

In the first group he announces that he is very much in earnest. In the second, he stops the continuity of his thought with a parenthetical but important statement that he is sure he is right. Then comes the message: we must (*a*) study words, and (*b*) be sure of their meaning. Then he particularizes his statement by the phrase "syllable by syllable." Not satisfied with that, he particularizes and intensifies his meaning still farther by specifying "letter by letter." Note that the connective *nay* does not mean here "no" or "less." It rather means "more." So that while the chief logical importance is in the third and fourth groups, there is a steady increase in intensity from the beginning, through each successive group, to the end.

Sometimes the parts of one group will be separated from each other by intervening groups, as in this unusual sentence from Tennyson's "Launcelot and Elaine":

I, sometime call'd the maid of Astolat,
 Come, for you left me taking no farewell,
 Hither, to take my last farewell of you.

"I come hither" must be perceived and read as a single group, each of the first two words being held in suspense until the group is finished.

Often a series of word groups is built into a sentence much as stones of irregular shape and size are used to build a wall. And

sometimes, as in forming an arch all the stones must be held in place until the keystone is added to bind them into unity, so the elements of a sentence must be held suspended until a final phrase completes it. See, for instance, the final sentence of the Ruskin selection, or note these sentences:

Mathematics, even in its higher branches, when undue emphasis is put upon the technique of calculation, and science, when laboratory exercises are given for their own sake, suffer from the same evil.

Till the slow sea rise and sheer cliff crumble,
 Till terrace and meadow the deep gulfs drink,
 Till the strength of the waves of the high tides humble
 The fields that lessen, the rocks that shrink,
 Here now in his triumph where all things falter,
 Stretched out on the spoils that his own hand spread,
 As a god self-slain on his own strange altar,
 Death lies dead.

Algernon Charles Swinburne.

High on a nightblack horse, in nightblack arms,
 With white breast-bone, and barren ribs of Death,
 And crown'd with fleshless laughter—some ten steps—
 In the half-light—thro' the dim dawn—advanced
 The monster, and then paused, and spake no word.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

Cause and effect. One relationship that calls for special attention is that between two units, one of which expresses a cause, and the other a result of that cause. It is especially troublesome because authors frequently connect such units with an innocent-looking "and"—which does not indicate the relationship at all. When I say, "Close the door, and have a chair," the "and" indicates that you are to do two things. But if I say, "Close the door, and you will suffocate us all," "and" indicates a result, in this case an unwanted result. Hence, "Close the door" in the second sentence must have a quite different expression. What it means is, "Do *not* close the door." Note these lines:

He batted his eyes, and the lightnings flashed;
 He clapped his hands, and the thunders rolled.

James Weldon Johnson.

The two clauses which compose each line may be read as if they were parallel, as if one was merely added to the other; but a moment's study shows that the writer's intention was to make the lightnings a *result* of the batting of the eyes, and the thunders a *result* of the clapping of the hands. This cause-and-effect relationship is easily expressed by the voice if it is understood by the mind, but it *must* be understood. Try to express the cause-and-effect relationship between the parts of the following sentences:

1. Treat every man as he deserves, and who would escape hanging?
2. This grew; I gave commands; then all smiles stopped together. (See "My Last Duchess," p. 436.)
3. Trust the people with the gravest questions, and in the end you educate the race.
4. Take from Washington the educated leaders, and you take from the country its moral mainspring.
5. You have had mental training, and instruction in various branches of learning; you ought to be full of intelligence.
6. Refuse to express a passion and it dies.
7. Count ten before venting your anger, and its occasion seems ridiculous.
8. I sift the snow on the mountains below, and the great pines groan aghast.
9. No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!
10. The hall door shuts again, and all the noise is gone.
11. The Christmas Spirit stood beside sick-beds, and they were cheerful; on foreign lands, and they were close at home; by struggling men, and they were patient in their greater hope; by poverty, and it was rich.

Ellipsis. Sometimes there is difficulty in grasping, and so expressing, the relationship between two words or phrases because a connective word or phrase has been omitted. In daily speech we are accustomed to these ellipses, and they cause no trouble. We say, for instance, "The man I met," meaning "The man that I met." Or we say, "Take this book to the library, this to your room," without repeating in the second clause the words "take" and "book." But in

literature such omissions are often troublesome. For instance, Whittier writes:

The night is mother of the day,
The winter of the spring.

meaning not that the night is the winter of the spring, but that winter is the mother of the spring. Emerson, on one occasion, wished to say that books are the best of things when they are well used; but if they are abused, they are among the worst of things. This statement he compressed as follows:

Books are the best of things well used; abused, among the worst.

The meaning of such a passage is seldom difficult to discover; but the oral communication of it may, because of carelessness or haste, be quite inadequate. In oral reading it is helpful to "think in" the omitted connective matter, or actually to speak it under your breath. The time required to supply these missing links will create pauses just where they are needed. Or, read aloud, inserting the appropriate *hence, as, therefore, accordingly, on the other hand*, etc., and noting carefully your vocal inflections; then try to use the same inflections while omitting the connective. Practice the following passages:

1. Sweeter than any sung my songs that found no tongue;
Nobler than any fact my wish that failed of act.
2. The race is to women more than the individual.
3. Men have a greater sense of justice, and women of mercy.
4. Self appears as what it is, an atom to a universe.
5. Suit the action to the word, the word to the action.
6. Is it ever hot in the square? There's a fountain to spout
and splash!
7. [Let us] Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our Enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire calamity.
8. Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am listening now.

Emphasis. It is sometimes supposed that the meaning of a passage depends upon "how you emphasize it." It depends upon a good deal more than that, as we have just seen. It depends upon the subtle shades of intonation, inflection, or cadence that reveal how one word or phrase is related to another. But it does also depend partly upon which words are emphasized. To illustrate this fact elocutionists used for a century or more (some still use it) this sentence:

Shall you ride to town today?

Perhaps they all borrowed it from John Mason's *Essay on Elocution* (London: 1748). At any rate it will be interesting to note his discussion of its ambiguity. "This question," he said, "is capable of being taken in four different senses, according to the different words on which you lay the emphasis. If it be laid on the word *you*, the answer may be, 'No, but I intend to send my servant in my stead.' If the emphasis be laid on the word *ride*, the proper answer might be, 'No, I intend to walk it.' If you place the emphasis on the word *town*, it is a different question, and the answer may be, 'No, for I design to ride into the country.' And if the emphasis be laid on the word *today*, the sense is still something different from all these, and the proper answer may be, 'No, but I shall tomorrow.'"

In both speaking and reading we may very easily convey a meaning we do not intend by stressing a wrong word, or failing to stress the right ones. For many years elocutionists complained that some preachers read the clause "He rose *again* from the dead" so as to imply that Christ had more than one Resurrection. They have pointed out also that many actors spoil the meaning of Macbeth's speech:

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No; this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.

by linking "one" with "green," instead of with "red," and failing to stress it, so implying that the guilty blood would color, not all the seas, but only a green sea. A radio announcer, at the time an heir to the British throne was born, reported the child's mother as saying, "I'm going to be the *mother* of this child, not the *nurses*." How

should he have spoken the sentence? Similar examples of misplaced emphasis are heard every day.

The nature of emphasis. In general we emphasize a word as we accent a syllable, by giving it more force, longer duration, and higher pitch. But the emphasized word may need special treatment in other ways also, such as an abrupt attack, or a slide of the pitch up or down. For instance, in the sentence "If you *do* go, be careful what you *do*," the word "do" will be emphasized both times, but not in the same way. The two "do's" will not sound alike. And there are other means of emphasis also. A word is always emphasized by making it conspicuous. If it stands in a succession of loudly spoken words you can make it conspicuous by speaking it softly, or by pausing before it, or after it, or both. Attempts have been made to describe and classify the various types of emphasis, but without satisfactory results. Emphasis is as various as thought itself. It is best to think of it not as a mere stressing of words, but as giving prominence to important ideas, and bringing them into the focus of attention. Even when you emphasize the right words you may give the wrong meaning. Archbishop Whately pointed out that the question "Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed?" might be so spoken as to imply that there was no other place or use for a candle, and yet the right words would be accented. In emphasis, as in grouping, there is no substitute for thinking. The surest means to correct expression is by re-creation of the author's thought.

What to emphasize. We may, however, note three kinds of matter that generally receive emphasis. First are those words that carry the chief freight of meaning. I have pointed out that primitive speech was probably made up of sentence words, and that we now express by cumbersome phrases what *could* be expressed, though less adequately, by single words. Each phrase is generally dominated by a single idea, sometimes expressed in a single word. "The weather is very cold today" can be reduced to the single word "Cold." Linguistic custom surrounds these key words with grammatical baggage, much of which is not needed to convey meaning. Obviously, then, in oral reading we should give emphasis to the essential idea-carrying words and drop the less important ones into the background. To attempt to emphasize all words is to empha-

size none. Meaning is clouded and obscured if we give strong value to every word, like a schoolboy orator trying to make every syllable count. The words that need attention are those that are indispensable, those we would use if attempting to put the thought into a very economical telegram. Meaning will be clear when the thought-carrying words stand out in a bright pattern against a background of less important words.

Second, prominence should be given to the new matter in each group or sentence at the expense of the old. The important idea in one sentence may, when repeated in the next sentence, become mere background material. For instance, in the third sentence of the Ruskin selection,

The entire difference between education and non-education . . . consists in this accuracy.

"education and non-education" and "this accuracy" are repetitions of ideas expressed in the preceding sentence. The new ideas are "entire difference" and "consists," and hence they should receive the highest prominence.

Contrast and comparison. Third, we should give prominence to ideas that are compared or contrasted with each other. But if the contrasted ideas are slightly concealed, or somewhat removed from each other, or if two contrasts occur together, the average reader has great difficulty in expressing them. How many will note, for instance, that in Ruskin's second sentence, "all the books in the British Museum" is contrasted with "ten pages" and that it is not contrasted with "good books"? Or, in the fourth sentence, that "canaille" is contrasted with "true descent" and "blood"? Most students see only the contrast between "ancient" and "modern," and nearly all have difficulty in expressing a contrast on both "modern" and "canaille." Still greater difficulty is sometimes experienced when emphasis must be spread over a whole phrase, as in the second sentence on "all the books in the British Museum." Emphasis on "all" or on "books" at the expense of the other words will distort the thought. It may be helpful to think of the phrase as meaning merely "everything."

Copy the following sentences, and underline the terms that stand in contrast to each other. To make perfectly sure that you know exactly what ideas stand in contrast to each other, tie these under-

lined terms together with a loose connecting line. Then try speaking these passages with exaggerated emphasis on the contrasts.

1. He can stare at the Chinese because for him the Chinese are a passive thing to be stared at; if he stares at the old lady in the next garden she becomes active. G. K. Chesterton.
2. We do not dislike them because they have so little force and fire that they cannot be interested in themselves. We dislike them because they have so much force and fire that they can be interested in us as well. G. K. Chesterton.
3. The misanthropes pretend that they despise humanity for its weakness. As a matter of fact they hate it for its strength. G. K. Chesterton.
4. There is more simplicity in the man who eats caviar on impulse than in the man who eats grape-nuts on principle. G. K. Chesterton.
5. Let us put a complex entrée into a simple old gentleman, let us not put a simple entrée into a complex old gentleman. G. K. Chesterton.
6. Mere liberty, though a very great thing to a bird, is the first and lowest and smallest condition of human society. John Stuart Blackie.
7. Liberty is a wine which lifts a man for a moment into an imaginary heaven, only that it may plunge him into a real hell. John Stuart Blackie.
8. Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-bys. Wilfred Owen.
9. We spend more on almost any article of bodily aliment or ailment than on our mental aliment. Henry David Thoreau.
10. We have a comparatively decent system of common schools, schools for infants only; but no school for ourselves. Henry David Thoreau.
11. The sense for human superiority ought, then, to be considered our line, as boring subways is the engineer's line and the surgeon's is appendicitis. William James.
12. There is little doubt that in the great metropolitan centers there exists a disposition to live and let live, to give and take, to agree and to agree to differ, which is not to be found in simple homogeneous communities. Walter Lippmann.

13. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. Abraham Lincoln.
14. I can never make out how it is that a knight-errant does not expect to be paid for his trouble, but a peddler-errant always does;—that people are willing to take hard knocks for nothing, but never to sell ribbands cheap;—that they are ready to go on fervent crusades to recover the tomb of a buried God, never on any travels to fulfill the orders of a living God;—that they will go anywhere barefoot to preach their faith, but must be well bribed to practice it, and are perfectly ready to give the Gospel gratis, but never the loaves and fishes. John Ruskin.

Implication. The words which do not receive emphasis, the words that should be pushed into the background, comprise among others two general classes: those whose meaning is implied, and those which echo what has already been said.

If an idea is implied, it is a waste of the reader's energy and the hearer's attention to assert it with any vigor. We do not assert, for instance, that water *flows* under the bridge, or that earth's last picture is *painted*, for it is a characteristic of water to flow, and of pictures to be painted. In Ruskin's first sentence, "earnestly" and "authoritatively" should receive more weight than "I tell you," which we will probably understand whether we hear it or not. In the next group, "I know I am right in this," the words "in this" add nothing to the thought that we would not probably imply without them, and could almost as well be omitted. So also the words "you must" that follow will be implied from the context, whether heard or not, and hence should be subordinated. When you say in the seventh sentence that an ordinary seaman "will be able to make his way," you mean, of course, that he will speak his wants; and so the word "speak" in the next clause expresses an idea which has already been implied. All such implications must be noted—and subordinated.

Spoken idiom prescribes also that many words such as auxiliary verbs, conjunctive adverbs, prepositions, and other particles receive no stress. Their meaning is not always implied, but if not, it serves a merely auxiliary function to the main ideas. For instance, in such a sentence as "*You* might have been *hurt* as well as *he*" we subordinate "might have been" and "as well as," though they are essential to the meaning. Such subordinations are so well established in

English speech that no mention of them would seem to be needed. But mistakes continue to be made. Recently an amateur radio announcer, in presenting a news report, was heard to say,

He hoped payment *could* start within a few days.

and

He promised to look into the *matter* as soon as possible.

and

The fate of the defendant *is* to be decided later.

There was nothing in the context of his script to justify these eccentric emphases. Such pitfalls await the speaker who is not giving thought to what he is saying.

Echo. A second class of words which must not be made prominent consists of those that echo ideas already expressed. They perform much the same function as pronouns. When we are aware of them we habitually subordinate them, and little difficulty is experienced when the echo lies close to its antecedent. In Ruskin's fifth sentence, for instance,

Whatever language he knows, he knows precisely; whatever word he pronounces, he pronounces rightly.

no one will be tempted to stress the second "knows" or the second "pronounces." To do so would obviously confuse one's hearers. But some students will not notice that "language" in this sentence echoes the same word in the preceding sentence; and nearly all will lack sufficient mental span to remember that "illiterate" in the seventh sentence echoes "uneducated" in the sixth. If an echo is not the same word as its antecedent, but a synonym, it frequently escapes detection by all but the most vigilant. In the seventh sentence "accent or turn of expression" is surely an echo of "speak a sentence" just above it, and is in turn echoed in the next sentence by "false accent or a mistaken syllable."

Of course not all repeated material is mere echo. Some repetitions are for the sake of emphasis. You will probably decide that the phrase "letter by letter" in the second sentence, though a repetition of the same phrase in the first sentence, is here repeated for the sake of emphasis, and that the same is true of "real accuracy"

following it. But do not be tricked into implying that you have earlier spoken of accuracy, but not of *real* accuracy.

Nothing so conduces to clarity of meaning as the proper suppression of echoed and implied material. Clarity is achieved in reading, as in printing or in painting, when a bright pattern stands out against a dull background; and it is just as important that the background be dull as that the pattern be bright. The strong idea-carrying words cannot be brought into prominence unless the unimportant words are kept in the background.

Read again the sentences above illustrating contrast, taking special pains to note and subordinate all echoed and implied material. Make these parts of the thought so weak as to be scarcely audible. By this means you can make even sharper the focus of attention on the contrasted ideas.

Pause. One device for good expression, though mechanical in nature, is so important that it deserves a word. It is pause. Hiram Corson records that when a boy in school he was required to read aloud twice a day. The instruction imparted was "limited, but very good as far as it went, namely, 'Speak distinctly and mind your stops.'" Consequently he acquired a fluent utterance "properly sectioned off by minding the stops."⁷

There are two principal reasons why young readers fail to mind the stops. First, they lack confidence. The excitement of reading before others causes a nervous acceleration of what is normally a too rapid rate of utterance. Under such circumstances the cessation of vocal activity for a fraction of a second seems an ominous silence full of dreadful possibilities. The reader feels that his audience will begin to wonder whether he has not broken down. To *deliberate* in the presence of an audience takes confidence. If you lack this confidence, there is not much that you can do about it except to keep as cool as possible, and hold your mind firmly on what you are saying. Confidence will come with experience.

A second reason why young readers seldom pause is just that they do not *deliberate*. They skim. Their minds do not *dwell* upon the ideas to be communicated. So surely as the mind begins to dwell upon the ideas expressed, there will be a focusing on separate word-

⁷ Hiram Corson, *The Voice and Spiritual Education* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1904), p. 21.

groups (how else *can* one think?), and these word-groups will generally be separated from each other by pauses.

A pause must not be thought of as a mere mechanical wait, a recess, a rest period. It must be packed with meaning if it is not to do more harm than good. It gives the reader a chance to look ahead and get a grip on the next thought, while it gives the hearer time to digest what has just been said and to become curious about what is coming. Pauses should be used by the reader to get clearly in mind the *relations* of phrases. Often they can be used to insert under the breath connective words and phrases which will help to make the expression of these relations clear.

In general, the places for pauses are easily discovered. Sometimes they are marked by punctuation. But it is not true, as many have been taught, that there must always be a pause at a comma. We do not, for instance, normally pause after "is" and after "and" in this sentence: "There is, first, the literature of knowledge, and, secondly, the literature of power." We do, however, pause at the other commas. Semicolons and periods are almost invariable indications of group endings, and there is no excuse for rushing breathlessly by them, and stopping only when breath is exhausted.

Pauses will, of course, be longer and more frequent when the thought is difficult or unfamiliar, or when the reader desires to be very impressive. Children understand the trick of increasing impressiveness, as when they say, "And then there came a great-big-bear!" Adults may have to return to childhood to discover so simple and obvious a device for expressiveness in reading.

It is important to note that pauses may be effectively employed not only between phrases, but also within a phrase. They may be used to isolate an unusual word so that it will be clearly heard, as "words of modern—canaille." Or they may be used for dramatic effect when suspense is allowed to accumulate before an idea which is to receive great prominence; as when Tennyson mourns "the sound of a voice—that is still"; or, in comedy, when Mrs. Malaprop bursts forth in astonishment, "I'm—*putrified!*" In any well-directed play the location and duration of pauses becomes a very fine and very important study. If the play is a classic, the pauses are sometimes standardized, and become a part of the tradition of the acting of that play which is passed down from generation to generation of actors.

It is manifestly impossible to list all the uses for pauses. The student must remember that they are an essential part of deliberation. "Speech is silvern; silence is golden," says the proverb, and silence is never more golden than in the midst of speech.

Précis writing. In preparing a selection for reading, one of the best aids in getting at the essential thought is to reduce it to a précis. That is, you boil it down to about a third its original size; or, to change the figure, you squeeze the water out of it, retaining its original form and proportion. The parts discarded are details, figures, ornaments, repetitions, minor illustrations, and less important modifiers. The finished précis should say all that the original says but should say it much more briefly. Yet it should be coherent and readable. It should avoid, as far as possible, the wording of the original, but should retain its attitude and point of view. That is, it should not be a comment on the selection, but a re-statement of the same material reduced to a concise summary. Nothing essential should be left out, and nothing should be added.

There is no surer test of your understanding of a selection (aside from reading it aloud to a competent teacher of reading) than reducing it to a précis. Wherever it has been tried, précis writing has been found to constitute an almost infallible test of intelligence. If approached in the spirit of a game it becomes an absorbing exercise. You will be surprised to find how hard it is to summarize *all* of your author's thought, to keep it in correct proportion, and to avoid adding anything of your own. Here is a précis of Ruskin on words. See if you cannot make a better one.

EDUCATION MEANS KNOWING WORDS—RUSKIN

There is no doubt of it, you must learn to examine and understand words minutely. You might read everything and remain uneducated; but read a little well and you are somewhat educated. The difference is one of accuracy. The educated man knows thoroughly whatever he knows of language, and especially is he thoroughly acquainted with the etymologies of words. But the uneducated may speak many languages and really know none. A sailor can express himself in many languages, but his speech reveals his illiteracy, just as the scholar's speech reveals him. Hence a verbal mistake will ruin one's reputation in any parliament.

Memorization. If you conscientiously study a selection according to these directions, you will probably find that you have almost, if not entirely, memorized it. You had better memorize it completely, if you have trouble, while reading, in holding in mind all the intricate interrelationships of words and phrases. But the worst thing you can possibly do in preparing a selection is to memorize merely the sounds of the words. What you should memorize is the *thought*. That is, memorize what goes into your *précis*. Then by careful re-reading and study of the selection, fix in mind the words in which your author clothes his thought. And remember Francis Bacon's discovery, corroborated by modern psychological studies: "If you read anything over twenty times, you will not learn it by heart so easily as if you were to read it only ten, trying to repeat it between whiles, and when memory failed looking at the book."⁸ Whatever study you give a selection will have more enduring results if distributed over a long period of time. That is, it is better to study fifteen minutes a day for four days than to study for an hour at a time. The intervals between study are valuable because the mind assimilates material when not giving active attention to it.

Summary. The teachings of this chapter are applicable to all oral reading, whether of prose, poetry, or drama. We shall apply them first to passages chiefly of logical prose, beginning with Ruskin's advice on the study of words. We may summarize the directions of this chapter in a

PLAN OF STUDY

1. Read the selection through silently to get the drift of the thought. Close your book and recall as completely as you can what you have just read.

2. Read it again, slowly, carefully, "suspiciously."

3. Look up immediately in a good dictionary all words which you are not perfectly sure you can define and pronounce correctly. Investigate all allusions; be sure you understand not only their meaning, but the reason for their use here.

4. Condense the thought of the whole into a *précis* approximately one-third the length of the original; that is, boil it down into a summary which retains all the essential parts of the thought. Avoid the wording of the original. Keep all the parts in proportion. The parts discarded

⁸ *Novum Organum* ii. 26.

will be figures, repetitions, minor illustrations, and rhetorical flourishes. The finished précis should read smoothly and preserve the attitude or point of view of the original.

5. Note the word-groups. It may be helpful to mark the limit of each by a vertical line, but do not allow this or any other mechanical device to interfere with re-creation of the thought while reading.

6. Note the relation of each group to its neighbors. Some possible relationships are: cause and effect, contrast, repetition, re-statement, amplification, development, subordination, parallelism, summary, parenthesis, climax, condition, reinforcement, modification, explanation.

7. Find the thought-center in each group. That is, which words carry the chief weight of meaning? Note all contrasts, making sure that you see clearly which words contain the contrasted ideas. Which words are mere echoes of ideas already expressed, and which are new, adding something additional to the thought? Which ideas are implied and so do not need emphasis? Emphasis will take care of itself if your thinking is correct.

8. Where can you make clearer the relation between words or groups by inserting such connectives as *hence*, *wherefore*, *so*, *as*, *for*, *besides*, *furthermore*, *since*, *for example*, *even*, *thus*, *on the contrary*, or *then again*?

9. Where will your hearers need time to assimilate the thought or feeling, and where will a pause be valuable in separating elements not closely related, or in directing attention to an important idea? With what will your own mind be occupied during these pauses?

10. When you understand the content of the selection, practice reading it aloud, *rethinking the thought as you go*. Arrange to have several practice periods, separated from each other by several hours, or by a whole day. Read the selection several times at each period, always with close concentration on the thought as revealed by your analysis. Force your voice to expressiveness by vivid re-creation of the thought, and by sympathetic response to the spirit of the selection.

11. All these steps will aid in memorizing the selection. Always memorize the *meaning*, rather than the sounds of the words, and by the whole, rather than by the part, method. After each reading of the selection, close your book and recall as much as you can of the thought. In this way you will fix in mind the thought chain, and can then readily substitute for your own the words of the author.

Criteria of good reading. As we proceed with our study, we shall, of course, gradually expect to increase our skill in reading. This should be accomplished by faithful adherence to the Plan of

Study (which will be augmented as we proceed from chapter to chapter). But we need to have some check upon our progress. We need criticism. And we need also to accumulate a body of criteria by which we can appraise reading or speaking wherever we hear them. Let us set down, then, a series of critical questions based upon the teachings of this chapter, and to be increased in succeeding chapters, with which we may check the reading of our fellow-students and others whom we hear. It will be found that many of them are applicable to social conversation, to the minister's sermon, the political address, the actor's interpretation of his lines, and to normal speech wherever heard. It is to be hoped that they will bring forth something more helpful and more intelligent than such lame comments as: "Well, I thought he was pretty good," "Why, he spoke very well; in fact, I think he's a very good speaker," or "She has *marvelous* powers of interpretation! Her reading was positively *thrilling*!"

CRITERIA

1. Did the reading sound like live conversation, or was it flattened out into a "reading tone"?
2. Did the reader taste the full flavor of his words?
3. Did he pronounce them correctly?
4. Were the thought units or word-groups distinct or blurred?
5. Was there any false grouping?
6. Was grouping too fine or too coarse for this material and this occasion?
7. Were group relations correct and clear?
8. Did the thought-carrying words stand out clearly from the others?
9. Were contrasts distinctly marked?
10. Were implied and echoed ideas properly subordinated?
11. Were various means and kinds of emphasis employed?
12. Was emphasis mechanical?
13. Was skillful use made of pause?

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Explain the relation between "natural" and "standard" expression.
2. In what sense may conversation be a norm of good oral reading?
3. What are the two characteristics of conversational speech?

4. What are the results of uttering words in reading without close attention to their meaning?
5. What are the units of thought by which meaning is communicated? What results if they are not sharply defined in one's utterance?
6. What are the chief relationships between word-groups, and how can a reader make sure that they will be clearly expressed?
7. What classes of words should normally receive emphasis?
8. What classes of words should normally *not* receive emphasis?
9. What values lie in pauses? What should determine their frequency and duration?
10. Of what value is précis writing as preparation for oral reading?

SELECTION FOR DRILL

The selection that follows, "Education Means Knowing Words," is designed to be used as a drill selection in class. It should be read, studied, analyzed, reread, criticized, and read again, until you can give a faithful rendering of all its logical content, and until you understand *and practice* all the principles discussed in this chapter. Do not be discouraged if the drill at times becomes irksome. In the acquisition of any skill, as piano playing or tennis, there are liable to be periods of positive nausea. Your reward will come later in the freedom and confidence which can be achieved only through these early periods of drudgery. When you have mastered this selection, you may test your mastery of the technique involved by attempting one or more of the selections which follow it. In preparing them you must depend upon your own resources, for no aids to their analysis are given. The same procedure should be followed in subsequent chapters.

EDUCATION MEANS KNOWING WORDS

From SESAME AND LILIES, I

John Ruskin

1. I tell you earnestly and authoritatively (I *know* I am right in this) you must get into the habit of looking intensely at words, and assuring yourself of their meaning, syllable by syllable—nay, letter by letter. . . . 2. You might read all the books in the British Museum (if you could live long enough) and remain an utterly "illiterate," uneducated person; but if you read ten pages of a good book, letter by letter,—that is to say, with real accuracy,—you are for evermore in some measure an educated person. 3. The entire difference between education and non-education (as regards the merely intellectual part of it), consists in this accuracy. 4. A well educated gentleman may not know many languages,—may not be able to speak any but his own,—may have read very few books. 5. But whatever language he knows, he knows precisely; whatever word he pronounces, he pronounces rightly;

above all, he is learned in the *peerage* of words; knows the words of true descent and ancient blood, at a glance, from words of modern canaille; remembers all their ancestry, their intermarriages, distant relationships, and the extent to which they were admitted, and offices they held, among the national noblesse of words at any time, and in any country. 6. But an uneducated person may know, by memory, many languages, and talk them all, and yet truly know not a word of any;—not a word even of his own. 7. An ordinarily clever and sensible seaman will be able to make his way ashore at most ports; yet he has only to speak a sentence of any language to be known for an illiterate person: so also the accent, or turn of expression of a single sentence, will at once mark the scholar. 8. And this is so strongly felt, so conclusively admitted, by educated persons, that a false accent or a mistaken syllable is enough, in the parliament of any civilized nation, to assign to a man a certain degree of inferior standing for ever.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS: (Numbers refer to sentences.) 1. Do not let "nay" decrease the intensity of your interest; it really means here "even more." 2. The bare contrast may be expressed thus: You could read everything and not be educated; but read ten pages accurately, and you are somewhat educated. You need not imply by your reading of "remain" that your hearers are now ignorant. "Of a good book" may cause trouble. Make it parenthetical, and read it so as to imply, "Of course I mean of a *good* book." Is "that is to say, with real accuracy" parenthetical explanation, or intensive development? 3. "In this accuracy" is echo; the important idea here is "consists." 4. Does "gentleman" here mean merely person, or something more? Is there implied contrast between "speak" and "know"? 5. Supply a connective after "peerage of words." In the latter half of this sentence you will have to choose rather arbitrarily what to subordinate. Note that "and the extent . . . noblesse of words" is not three groups, but one, climaxed at "noblesse." 6-7. Supply a connective between these sentences. Note that "illiterate" in 7 echoes "uneducated" in 6; the important idea is "known." Couldn't the last clause be telegraphed thus: "So also the scholar"? 8. "By educated persons" will be troublesome. Has it been implied? Be careful also with "in the parliament of any civilized nation." Is it all new material? Here as elsewhere Ruskin crowds so many new and important ideas into his sentence that he makes interpretation very difficult. It is difficult to find a peak or chief centre of meaning. Is this a fault in composition? When your analysis is completed you should practice reading and rereading the selection, holding the meaning firmly in mind and trying to make your reading sound like earnest, sincere, direct conversation.

SELECTIONS FOR PRACTICE

THE FIRST RULE OF STUDY

*From THE TEACHER **

George Herbert Palmer

The first rule shall be—*observe!* A simple matter—one, I dare say, which it will seem to you difficult not to follow. You have a pair of eyes; how can you fail to observe? Ah, but eyes can only look; that is not observing. You want to observe, not to look only. You want to penetrate into things, to find out what is there. There is nothing on earth which, when observed, is not of enormous interest. You cannot find anything so destitute of the principles of life, that, when you come to study it, it will not disclose those principles to you. But it makes all the difference whether you do thus observe, whether you are willing to hold your attention to the thing in hand and see what it contains. After puzzling long about the charm of Homer, I once applied to a learned friend and said to him, "Can you tell me why Homer is so interesting? Why can't you and I write as he wrote? Why is it that his art was lost with him, and that today it is impossible for us to quicken such interest as he?" "Well," said my friend, "I have meditated on that a great deal, but it seems to me it comes to about this: Homer looked long at a thing. Why," said he, "do you know that if you should hold up your thumb and look at it long enough, you would find it immensely interesting?" Homer looks a great while at his thumb; he sees precisely the thing he is dealing with. He does not confuse it with anything else. It is sharp to him; and because it is sharp to him it stands out sharply for us over all these thousands of years.

HOW TO READ

From TWO VIEWS OF EDUCATION †

Lane Cooper

The process of making monotonous black characters on the page vividly stir the latent sense-perceptions is, however, relatively slow and irksome. Few people have ever learned to do it consistently; and hence, it is fair to say, few have ever truly learned to read. The moral is, read slowly. Take ample time. Pause where the punctuation bids one

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pause; note each and every comma; wait a moment between a period and the next capital letter. And pause when common sense bids you pause, that is, when you have not understood. As the line of sentences comes filing before the window of your soul, examine each individual expression with the animus, and more than the animus, you would maintain were you paying-teller in a bank; saying to yourself continually, "Do I know this word?" and, "What is this phrase worth?"

Read aloud; read slowly; read suspiciously. Re-read. What a busy man has time to read at all, he has time to read more than once. Was it not Emerson who held that he could not afford to own a book until it was ten years old—had at least to that extent proved its ability to survive? Jealous of his time, he let others sift the ashes. And was it not Schopenhauer who considered no book worth while that was not worth a third perusal? If we read a thing but once, that usually is but so much lost time. The most industrious student forgets a large part of what he tries to retain. The best-read man is the one who has oftenest read the best things.

OF STUDIES

Francis Bacon

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring; for ornament is in discourse; and for ability is in the judgement and disposition of business; for expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one: but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth; to use them too much for ornament is affectation; to make judgement wholly by their rules is the humour of the scholar: they perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need proying by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read but not curiously, and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that

would be only in the less important arguments and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man; and therefore, if a man write little he had need have a great memory; if he confer little he had need have a present wit; and if he read little he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not.

THE WASTE OF CONVERSATION

*From THE ART OF THINKING **

Ernest Dimmet

"Conference makes a ready man," Bacon said. Ready for what? The Ancients, like most Orientals today, seem to have spoken only when they had something to say, and their scale of valuing what was worth saying and what was not, appears to have been the same as that of their best writers. Hence the pithiness of their speeches. When a writer, not even of the highest order, hits upon the device of contracting his dialogues to the two or three brief sentences with which impassioned people will wind up a conversation, he produces an unexpectedly powerful effect.

Now, think of the twaddle in the "smoker," of the empty boyish tongue-wagging in club-houses, of the *risqué* gossip gilt over with a dash of wit in French salons, or of the corresponding Anglo-Saxon delight in stale anecdotes! What a mockery to repeat that speech is the instrument of thought when it has become the mere satisfaction of a physical craving! If Bacon could rewrite, in the light of modern facts, the famous sentences from which I was quoting above, he would say that reading despoils a man of his personality and conference shows that he has lost it.

THE WORSHIP OF SELF-EXPRESSION

From THE CRISIS IN MORALS †

Gilbert Murray

Lastly, there has been the false theory: the theory which has already done a vast amount of harm in education and is still running riot in the field of art. I mean the worship of self-expression. I will leave art aside for the present, but in education I believe this vicious dogma is approaching its unlamented burial. No doubt it had some psychological

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excuse for coming into existence against an excessive authoritarianism which tried to turn out all pupils according to one pattern. It was right to consider each pupil's character and personality and train it in appropriate ways. But to suggest that the pupil's whole duty is to express himself, and the teacher's whole duty to help him to do so, seems to me the direct contrary of education. What I as a student have wanted to receive—and what as a teacher I have tried to give—has been always in different contexts the same thing: I wanted to get into contact with minds superior to my own, and thereby to become capable of seeing things which I could not now see, and appreciating and enjoying things that were now above me. We all start life with an extremely limited appreciation of the greatness and beauty by which we are surrounded, and also with a pretty confident opinion that a thing which does not happen to please us is not up to much. I cannot imagine an education which for me personally would have been more utterly damnable than to teach me to be contented with my existing beliefs and powers and just express them—to take the raw, untrained Australian boy called Gilbert Murray as the measure of the universe, and simply encourage him to go ahead. I trust however that this nightmare will pass.

WHAT IS A STUDENT?

*From AEQUANIMITAS **

William Osler

Except it be a lover, no one is more interesting as an object of study than a student. Shakespeare might have made him a fourth in his immortal group. The lunatic with his fixed idea, the poet with his fine frenzy, the lover with his frantic idolatry, and the student aflame with the desire for knowledge are of "imagination all compact." To an absorbing passion, a whole-souled devotion, must be joined an enduring energy, if the student is to become a devotee of the gray-eyed goddess to whose law his services are bound. Like the quest of the Holy Grail, the quest of Minerva is not for all. For the one, the pure life; for the other, what Milton calls "a strong propensity of nature." Here again the student often resembles the poet—he is born, not made. While the resultant of two molding forces, the accidental, external conditions, and the hidden germinal energies, which produce in each one of us national, family, and individual traits, the true student possesses in some measure a divine spark which sets at naught their laws. Like the Snark, he defies definition, but there are three unmistakable signs by which you may recognize the genuine article from a Boojum—an ab-

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sorbing desire to know the truth, an unswerving steadfastness in its pursuit, and an open, honest heart, free from suspicion, guile, and jealousy.

At the outset do not be worried about this big question—Truth. It is a very simple matter if each one of you starts with the desire to get as much as possible. No human being is constituted to know the truth, and nothing but the truth; and even the best of men must be content with fragments, with partial glimpses, never the full fruition. In this unsatisfied quest the attitude of mind, the desire, the thirst—a thirst that from the soul must rise!—the fervent longing, are the be-all and the end-all. What is the student but a lover courting a fickle mistress who ever eludes his grasp? In this very elusiveness is brought out his second great characteristic—steadfastness of purpose. Unless from the start the limitations incident to our frail human faculties are frankly accepted, nothing but disappointment awaits you. The truth is the best you can get with your best endeavor, the best that the best men accept—with this you must learn to be satisfied, retaining at the same time with due humility an earnest desire for an ever larger portion. Only by keeping the mind plastic and receptive does the student escape perdition. It is not, as Charles Lamb remarks, that some people do not know what to do with truth when it is offered them, but the tragic fate is to reach, after years of patient search, a condition of mind-blindness in which the truth is not recognized, though it stares you in the face. This can never happen to a man who has followed step by step the growth of a truth, and who knows the painful phases of its evolution.

WHAT IS COLLEGE FOR?

*From MEMORIES AND STUDIES **

William James

What the colleges should at least try to give us, is a general sense of what, under various disguises, superiority has always signified and may still signify. The feeling for a good human job anywhere, the admiration for the truly admirable, the disesteem of what is cheap and trashy and impermanent—this is what we call the critical sense, the sense for ideal values. It is the better part of what men know as wisdom. Some of us are wise in this way naturally and by genius; some of us never become so. But to have spent one's youth at college in contact with the choice and rare and precious, and yet still to be a blind prig or vulgarian, unable to scent out human excellence or to divine it among its accidents,

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to know it only when ticketed and labeled and forced on us by others, this indeed should be accounted the very calamity and shipwreck of a higher education.

The sense for human superiority ought, then, to be considered our line, as boring subways is the engineer's line and the surgeon's is appendicitis. Our colleges ought to have lit up in us a lasting relish for the better kind of man, a loss of appetite for mediocrities, and a disgust for cheap jacks. The best claim we can make for the higher education, the best single phrase in which we can tell what it ought to do for us, is, then, exactly what I said: it should enable us to know a good man when we see him.

Democracy is on trial, and no one knows how it will stand the ordeal. What its critics now affirm is that its preferences are inveterately for the inferior. So it was in the beginning, they say, and so it will be world without end. Vulgarly enthroned and institutionalized, elbowing everything superior from the highway, this, they tell us, is our irremediable destiny.

Now who can be absolutely certain that this may not be the career of democracy? Nothing future is quite secure; states enough have inwardly rotted; and democracy as a whole may undergo self-poisoning. But the best of us are filled with a contrary vision of a democracy stumbling through every error till its institutions glow with justice and its customs shine with beauty. Our better men shall show the way and we shall follow them; so we are brought round again to the mission of the higher education in helping us to know the better kind of man whenever we see him.

MEN OF SALT

*From SALT **

Henry Van Dyke

Christ chose an image which was familiar when He said to His disciples, "Ye are the salt of the earth." This was His conception of their mission, their influence. They were to cleanse and sweeten the world in which they lived, to keep it from decay, to give a new and more wholesome flavor to human existence. Their function was not to be passive but active. The sphere of its action was to be this present life. There is no use in saving salt for heaven. It will not be needed there. Its mission is to permeate, season, and purify things on earth.

(Men of privilege without power are waste material.) (Men of enlightenment without influence are the poorest kind of rubbish.) Men of

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intellectual and moral and religious culture, who are not active forces for good in society, are not worth what it costs to produce and keep them. If they pass for Christians they are guilty of obtaining respect under false pretenses. They are meant to be the salt of the earth. And the first duty of salt is to be salty. The saltiness of salt is the symbol of a noble, powerful, truly religious life. [You college students are men of privilege.] It costs ten times as much, in labor and care and money, to bring you out where you are today, as it costs to educate the average man, and a hundred times as much as it costs to raise a boy without any education. This fact brings you face to face with a question: Are you going to be worth your salt?

You have had mental training, and plenty of instruction in various branches of learning. You ought to be full of intelligence. You have had moral discipline, and the influences of good example have been steadily brought to bear upon you. You ought to be full of principle. You have had religious advantages and abundant inducements to choose the better part. You ought to be full of faith. What are you going to do with your intelligence, your principle, your faith? It is your duty to make active use of them for the seasoning, the cleansing, the saving of the world. Don't be sponges. Be the salt of the earth.,

THE TOLERANCE OF CITY CROWDS

*From A PREFACE TO MORALS **

Walter Lippmann

There is little doubt that in the great metropolitan centers there exists a disposition to live and let live, to give and take, to agree and to agree to differ, which is not to be found in simple homogeneous communities. In complex communities life quickly becomes intolerable if men are intolerant. For they are in daily contact with almost everybody and everything they could conceivably wish to persecute. Their victims would be their customers, their employees, their landlords, their tenants and perhaps their wives' relations. But in a simple community a kind of pastoral intolerance for everything alien adds a quaint flavor to living. For the most part it vents itself in the open air. The terrible indictments drawn up in a Mississippi village against the Pope in Rome, the Russian nation, the vices of Paris, and the enormities of New York are in the main quite lyrical. The Pope may never even know what the Mississippi preacher thinks of him and New York continues to go to, but never apparently to reach, hell.

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When an agitator wishes to start a crusade, a religious revival, an inquisition, or some sort of jingo excitement, the farther he goes from the centers of modern civilization the more following he can attract. It is in the back-woods and in the hill country, in kitchens and in old men's clubs, that fanaticism can be kindled. The urban crowd, if it has been urban for any length of time and has become used to its environment, may be fickle, faddish, nervous, unstable, but it lacks the concentration of energy to become fiercely excited for any length of time about anything. At its worst it is a raging mob, but it is not persistently fanatical. There are too many things to attract its attention for it to remain preoccupied for long with any one thing.

THE FLY

From THE CESTUS OF AGLAIA, VI

John Ruskin

I believe we can nowhere find a better type of a perfectly free creature than in the common house-fly. Nor free only, but brave; and irreverent to a degree which I think no human republican could by any philosophy exalt himself to. There is no courtesy in him; he does not care whether it is a king or a clown whom he teases; and in every step of his swift, mechanical march, and in every pause of his resolute observation, there is one and the same expression of perfect egotism, perfect independence and self-confidence, and conviction of the world's having been made for flies. Strike at him with your hand; and to him, the mechanical fact and external aspect of the matter is, what to you it would be, if an acre of red clay, ten feet thick, tore itself up from the ground in one massive field, hovered over you in the air for a second, and came crashing down with an aim. That is the external aspect of it; the inner aspect, to his fly's mind, is of a quite natural and unimportant occurrence—one of the momentary conditions of his active life. He steps out of the way of your hand, and alights on the back of it. You cannot terrify him, nor govern him, nor persuade him, nor convince him. He has his own positive opinion on matters; not an unwise one, usually, for his own ends; and will ask no advice of yours. He has no work to do—no tyrannical instinct to obey. The earthworm has his diggings; the bee her gathering and building; the spider her cunning network; the ant her treasury and accounts. All these are comparatively slaves, or people of vulgar business. But your fly, free in the air, free in the chamber—a black incarnation of caprice—wandering, investigating, flitting, flirting, feasting at his will, with rich variety of choice in feast, from the heaped sweets of the grocer's window

to those of the butcher's back-yard, and from the galled place on your cab-horse's back to the brown spot in the road, from which, as the hoof disturbs him, he rises with angry republican buzz—what freedom is like this?

THE IMPORTANCE OF EMOTION

*From PUBLIC SPEAKING **

James Albert Winans

One often meets a prejudice against the very words *feeling* and *emotion*. This is due in part to a misuse of them. The prejudice is often really against excessive emotion, against control by emotion in defiance of reason, or against the over-free expression of emotion. Perhaps a better word to express the thing objected to is *sentimentality*. Emotion is a constant factor in our mental states, unless we reach absolute indifference. To be without emotion, indeed, is to be without interest, without happiness as well as without sorrow, without desires good or bad. Even our *reasons* are usually emotions. Whether we act for the sake of "fat" war contracts or for love of country, whether we seek selfish pleasure or die for a friend, whether we decide for "a short life and a merry one" or for a moral, temperate career, and whether we do our work or go to the game,—in all cases we act, if we are acting beyond the range of habit, under the control of emotion. It makes no difference that we may call our emotion a reason or a motive. Even the man who prides himself most on living the life of reason must, if he be a true philosopher, be led by one master emotion,—love of truth. We should fix in our minds the fact that emotion, as such, is neither good nor bad; that a particular emotion may be good or bad. Also, emotions may be violent, moderate, or weak in their expression. The man who loses himself in the study of minerals may be as truly emotional as one who cheers for Alma Mater. Emotion has no necessary relation to either whoops or tears.

THE POWER OF REASON

From POWER †

Bertrand Russell

It is customary nowadays to decry reason as a force in human affairs, yet the rise of science is an overwhelming argument on the other side. The men of science proved to intelligent laymen that a certain kind of

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intellectual outlook ministers to military prowess and to wealth; these ends were so ardently desired that the new intellectual outlook overcame that of the Middle Ages, in spite of the force of tradition and the revenues of the Church and the sentiments associated with Catholic theology. The world ceased to believe that Joshua caused the sun to stand still, because Copernican astronomy was useful in navigation; it abandoned Aristotle's physics, because Galileo's theory of falling bodies made it possible to calculate the trajectory of a cannon-ball; it rejected the story of the flood because geology is useful in mining; and so on. It is now generally recognized that science is indispensable both in war and in peace-time industry, and that, without science, a nation can be neither rich nor powerful.

All this effect on opinion has been achieved by science merely through appeal to fact: what science had to say in the way of general theories might be questionable, but its results in the way of technique were patent to all. Science gave the white man the mastery of the world which he has begun to lose only since the Japanese acquired his technique. . . .

Those who maintain that reason has no power in human affairs overlook two conditions. If, in the name of reason, you summon a man to alter his fundamental purposes—to pursue, say, the general happiness rather than his own power—you will fail, and you will deserve to fail, since reason alone cannot determine the ends of life. And you will fail equally if you attack deep-seated prejudices while your argument is still open to question, or is so difficult that only men of science can see its force. But if you can prove, by evidence which is convincing to every sane man who takes the trouble to examine it, that you possess a means of facilitating the satisfaction of existing desires, you may hope, with a certain degree of confidence, that men will ultimately believe what you say.

BOOKS ABOUT BOOKS

*From ON READING SHAKESPEARE **

Logan Pearsall Smith

Whether there are sailors who sail without charts is doubtful, but there certainly are travellers who prefer to journey with no map to guide them, and readers who are contemptuous of books about books. They gain no profit, they say, by looking at things through the eyes of others. But this impromptu, uninstructed way of grasping at masterpieces in spontaneous leaps of feeling is but a poor way of learning

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how to enjoy them. The first surprise and flush of prompt delight is, of course, of great, perhaps the greatest, value; but a true appreciation is based on something more than feeling: it demands that we should not only enjoy, but understand our pleasure, and make it food for thought; should learn the esthetic reasons for it, and learn also all we can about the origins and environments of the monuments and masterpieces we gaze on. To understand them we must know their place in history, and their relative position among other masterpieces. And I at least find that my vision of the things I like is greatly enhanced and clarified by seeing them reflected in the luminous minds of other people. Esthetic appreciation is, luckily, a thing that can be communicated, can be learnt from others—the glow of it is a catching fire. How often an admiration spoken of by someone we admire—sometimes the mere mention of a preference—has opened for us the gate into a new world of beauty! And certainly the debt I owe to the great interpreters of literature is far too large to allow me to join in the common abuse of critics; they have given me ears, they have given me eyes, they have taught me—and have taught all of us really—the best way of appreciating excellence, and how and where to find it. How many sights unguided travellers pass by! how many beauties readers of great works will miss, if they refuse to read the books about them!

THINKING FOR ONESELF

*From THE ART OF LITERATURE **

Arthur Schopenhauer

A library may be very large, but if it is in disorder, it is not so useful as one that is small but well arranged. In the same way, a man may have a great mass of knowledge, but if he has not worked it up by thinking it over for himself, it has much less value than a far smaller amount which he has thoroughly pondered. For it is only when a man looks at his knowledge from all sides, and combines the things he knows by comparing truth with truth, that he obtains a complete hold over it and gets it into his power. A man cannot turn over anything in his mind unless he knows it; he should, therefore, learn something; but it is only when he has turned it over that he can be said to know it. . . .

It is incredible what a different effect is produced upon the mind by thinking for oneself, as compared with reading. It carries on and intensifies that original difference in the nature of two minds which leads the one to think and the other to read. What I mean is that reading

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forces alien thoughts upon the mind—thoughts which are as foreign to the drift and temper in which it may be for the moment, as the seal is to the wax on which it stamps its imprint. The mind is thus entirely under compulsion from without; it is driven to think this or that, though for the moment it may not have the slightest impulse or inclination to do so. . . .

Reading is nothing more than a substitute for thought of one's own. It means putting the mind into leading-strings. The multitude of books serves only to show how many false paths there are, and how widely astray a man may wander if he follows any of them. But he who is guided by his genius, he who thinks for himself, who thinks spontaneously and exactly, possesses the only compass by which he can steer aright. A man should read only when his own thoughts stagnate at their source, which will happen often enough even with the best of minds. On the other hand, to take up a book for the purpose of scaring away one's own original thoughts is sin against the Holy Spirit. It is like running away from Nature to look at a museum of dried plants or gaze at a landscape in copper-plate.

THE STRUGGLE FOR SYMMETRY

*From ONE MAN'S MEAT **

E. B. White

This life I lead, setting pictures straight, squaring rugs up with the room—it suggests an ultimate symmetry toward which I strive and strain. Yet I doubt that I am any nearer my goal than I was last year, or ten years ago, even granted that this untidy world is ready for any such orderliness. Going rapidly through the hall, on an errand of doubtful import to God and country, I pause suddenly, like an ant in its tracks, and with the toe of my sneaker shift the corner of the little rug two inches in a southerly direction, so that the edge runs parallel with the floor seams. Healed by this simple geometry, I continue my journey. The act, I can only conclude, satisfies something fundamental in me; and if, fifteen minutes later on my way back, I find that the rug is again out of line, I repeat the performance with no surprise and no temper. Long ago I accepted the fact of a rug's delinquency; it has been a pitched battle and the end is not in sight. At least one of my ancestors died lunging out of bed at the enemy, and it is more than likely that I shall fall at last, truing up a mediocre mat.

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Intellectually, I am ready to admit that there is no special virtue in an accurate alignment of inanimate objects, that a picture hanging cockeyed on the wall and a rug askew are conceivably as effective as they would be straight; but in practice I can't go it. If it is my nature to adjust the stance of a watercolor rather than to enjoy its substance, then that's the whole of it, and I'm lucky to get even the dubious enjoyment which I occasionally experience from coming upon it and finding it square.

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

From DREAMTHORP

Alexander Smith

In my garden I spend my days; in my library I spend my nights. My interests are divided between my geraniums and my books. With the flower I am in the present; with the book I am in the past. I go into my library, and all history unrolls before me. I breathe the morning air of the world while the scent of Eden's roses yet lingered in it, while it vibrated only to the world's first brood of nightingales, and to the laugh of Eve. I see the pyramids building; I hear the shoutings of the armies of Alexander; I feel the ground shake beneath the march of Cambyzes. I sit as in a theatre,—the stage is time, the play is the play of the world. What a spectacle it is! What kingly pomp, what processions file past, what cities burn to heaven, what crowds of captives are dragged at the chariot-wheels of conquerors! I hear or cry "Bravo" when the great actors come on shaking the stage. I am a Roman emperor when I look at a Roman coin. I lift Homer, and I shout with Achilles in the trenches. The silence of the unpeopled Syrian plains, the out-comings and in-goings of the patriarchs, Abraham and Ishmael, Isaac in the fields at even-tide, Rebekah at the well, Jacob's guile, Esau's face reddened by desert sun-heat, Joseph's splendid funeral procession—all these things I find within the boards of my Old Testament. What a silence in those old books as of a half-peopled world—what bleating of flocks—what green pastoral rest—what indubitable human existence! Across brawling centuries of blood and war, I hear the bleating of Abraham's flocks, the tinkling of the bells of Rebekah's camels. O men and women, so far separated yet so near, so strange yet so well-known, by what miraculous power do I know ye all! Books are the true Elysian fields where the spirits of the dead converse, and into these fields a mortal may venture unappalled.

THE BIRTH OF RELIGION

From THIS BELIEVING WORLD *

Lewis Browne

In the beginning there was fear; and fear was in the heart of man; and fear controlled man. At every turn it whelmed over him, leaving him no moment of ease. With the wild souging of the wind it swept through him; with the crashing of the thunder and the growling of lurking beasts. All the days of man were gray with fear, because all his universe seemed charged with danger. Earth and sea and sky were set against him; with relentless enmity, with inexplicable hate, they were bent on his destruction. . . . Boulders toppled and broke his bones; diseases ate his flesh; death seemed ever ready to lay him low. And he, poor gibbering half-ape nursing his wound in some draughty cave, could only tremble with fear. . . .

In the world he saw about him, *all* objects were animate; sticks, stones, storms, and all else. He shied at each of them suspiciously, much as a horse shies suspiciously at bits of paper by the roadside. And not merely were all things animate to the savage, but they were seething with emotions, too. Things could be angry, and they could feel pleased; they could destroy him if they so willed, or they could let him alone. . . .

Instinctively he wanted to thrash whatever seemed to bring him evil. Only he was afraid. From experience he knew that fighting was useless, that the enemy-objects, the falling boulders that maimed him, and the flooding streams that wrecked his hut, were in some uncanny way proof against his spears and arrows. That was why he was finally forced to more subtle methods of attack. Since blows could not subdue the hostile rocks or streams, our ancestor tried to subdue them with magic. He thought words might avail: strange syllables uttered in groans, or meaningless shouts accompanied by beating tom-toms. Or he tried wild dances. Or luck charms. Of one thing he seemed most stubbornly convinced: that *some* spell would work. Somehow the hostile things around him *could* be appeased or controlled, he believed; somehow death *could* be averted. Why he should have been so certain, no one can tell. It must have been his instinctive adjustment to the conditions of a world that was too much for him. Self-preservation must have forced him to that certainty, for without it self-preservation would have been impossible. . . .

So he had faith—and developed religion.

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STEADY NERVES IN A CRISIS

*From G. B. S., A FULL LENGTH PORTRAIT **

George Bernard Shaw

In moments of crisis my nerves act in the most extraordinary way. When utter disaster seems imminent my whole being is instantaneously braced to avoid it: I size up the situation in a flash, set my teeth, contract my muscles, take a firm grip of myself, and, without a tremor, always do the wrong thing. . . .

I learned to drive in 1908 on a car that had its accelerator pedal between the clutch and the brake. That arrangement became automatic for me; and when I changed to cars with the accelerator to the right of the brake I became a deadly dangerous driver in an emergency when I had not my trusty chauffeur next me to turn off the spark when I mistook the pedals. He was unfortunately not with me in South Africa. Well, we were on our way to Port Elizabeth from a pleasant seaside place called Wilderness. I was at the wheel and had done a long drive over mountain passes, negotiating tracks and gorges in a masterly manner, when we came upon what looked like a half mile of straight safe smooth road; and I let the car rip. Suddenly she twisted violently to the left over a bump and made for the edge of the road. I was more than equal to the occasion: not for an instant did I lose my head: my body was rigid: my nerves were of steel. I turned the car's head the other way, and pressed down the wrong pedal as far as it would go. The car responded nobly: she dashed across the road, charged and cleared a bank, taking a barbed wire fence with her, and started off across the veldt. On we went, gathering speed, my foot hard on the accelerator, jerking and crashing over the uneven ground, plunging down a ravine and up the other side, and I should have been bumping over the veldt to this day if Commander Newton, who was in charge of me, hadn't said sternly, ("Will you take your foot off the accelerator and put it on the brake") Well, I am always open to reason. I did as he suggested and brought the car to a standstill, the last strand of barbed wire still holding, though drawn out for miles. I was unhurt; but my wife had been rolled about with the luggage in the back seat and was seriously wounded.

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Chapter 3

ATTITUDE

THE discussion in the preceding chapter may have seemed to imply that if you get your author's words properly grouped and related and stressed and subordinated you will deliver his meaning clearly and accurately. But interpretation is not so simple a matter. We cannot always take a sentence at its face value. The factors we have discussed may tell what the sentence means, but they may not always tell what the author means. A writer often intends something quite different from what a literal interpretation of his language would indicate. He may be joking, or ironical, or sarcastic. He may understate or overstate what he means. Or he may put as a question what he intends as an assertion. It is necessary, then, in interpreting a passage to discover not only its literal grammatical meaning, but also how the author intends it to be taken. This we call *attitude*.

Our daily speech is full of these discrepancies between literal and intended meanings. We say, "Yes you will," when we mean, "No you won't." We say, "Well what do you know?" when we mean to exclaim, "That's astonishing." We say, "You're a *big* help," when we mean, "You are not helping at all." Our grandfathers used to ask, "Where did you get that hat?" when they had no curiosity at all about the origin of the article but meant rather to jeer at its unconventional design. In such cases the speaker's voice tells us that he means something other than what his words indicate, and we understand quite readily this language of vocal inflection. But in reading from the printed page we do not have the author's voice to guide us. As Bernard Shaw said, "There are fifty ways of saying Yes, and five hundred of saying No, but only one way of writing

them down.”¹ Lacking the help of the writer’s voice we must ferret out his intention by careful study of the context.

Let us test Mr. Shaw’s assertion by trying to say Yes, not in fifty, but in five, ways. Answer the question, “Are you coming with me?” so as to express the meanings here indicated:

Yes. (I thought you knew that.)

Yes. (But I don’t want to.)

Yes. (I’m not quite sure; I guess so.)

Yes. (I’ve *told* you and *told* you I’m coming.)

Yes. (That’s a wonderful idea. I never thought of that.)

Frame another question and use the word “No” to answer it with five different meanings.

A variety of meanings may be expressed by phrases or word groups, as well as by single words. We have already seen how meaning changes when emphasis is shifted from one word to another. But different attitudes in the speaker may give the group different meanings even when the emphasis remains on the same words. By way of illustration, note the different meanings indicated below for the simple sentence “I thought he would fail.” For all of them the main emphasis will be on “thought” and “fail.” The meanings do not depend upon emphasis, or subordination, or grouping, or, on the other hand, upon any essential change in the speaker’s emotional state. It is likely that all of them could be expressed by a speaker who was agitated by anger, or fear, or grief. They are essentially due to changes in *logical* attitude. Read the sentence aloud trying to express the meanings indicated.

1. I thought he would fail. (And he has.)
2. I thought he would fail. (Just what I expected all along.)
3. I thought he would fail. (What a mistake I made!)
4. I thought he would fail. (I cannot understand why he hasn’t.)
5. I thought he would fail. (That is what I am accused of thinking? How absurd!)
6. I thought he would fail. (Ironically. When obviously he has not failed.)
7. I thought he would fail. (But I didn’t think it would matter.)
8. I thought he would fail. (But I wasn’t prepared for such complete failure.)

¹ Bernard Shaw, Preface to *Seven Plays* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1951), p. xxiv.

Question and assertion. It is commonly taught that questions have a characteristic grammatical form, and that they are always to be spoken with a rising inflection, though we are seldom informed just where in the sentence this inflection belongs. But the fact is that speakers and writers frequently put questions in the form of assertions, and make assertions in the form of questions. In these cases the inflections used should depend upon the intention of the speaker. Sometimes, but not always, the writer's punctuation tells us what is meant. If it doesn't, we must examine the context.

Here are several sentences that have the form of assertions, but all of them may be spoken as questions. Try speaking them both ways.

1. Your mind is made up.
2. He said he would not come.
3. These flowers are yours.
4. You will do this for me.
5. They have come from town.

Literature abounds with passages which have the form of questions, but which in intention are assertions. Sometimes an answer seems to be expected, but an answer so obvious that no one could miss it. In other cases no reply is called for and the question should be spoken as if it were an assertion. When Browning's Duke asks, "Who'd stoop to blame this sort of trifling?" (see p. 435) he really means to say that nobody would. When Juliet asks, "What's in a name?" (see p. 516) she means that names are not important. The questions below are all from selections in this book, with the pages where they occur indicated. Before you read them aloud examine their contexts. Speak them first as if they were real inquiries; then speak them as you think they were meant to be spoken.

1. What care I how fair she be? p. 279
2. Is it ever hot in the square? p. 453
3. Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store? p. 289
4. Who can tell whence these traits have their being? p. 118
5. Has the quadruple press multiplied the genius of our literary men? p. 113
6. What price glory then? p. 90
7. Will't please you sit and look at her? (This is a polite command.) p. 435
8. My word! Where does that person come from? p. 510

Besides varying in logical import, questions, like other sentences, may be colored by more or less violent emotion. The questioner may ask with gentle melancholy, "Where are the songs of spring?" or he may, like Macbeth, roar with brutal ferocity,

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-fac'd loon!
Where gott'st thou that goose look?

How would you interpret these lines from Markham's "The Man with the Hoe" (see p. 402)? Are they merely requests for information? They have sometimes been interpreted that way. Or are they not rather terrible accusations against those who are responsible for this man's condition?

Who made him dead to rapture and despair? . . .
Who loosened and let down this brutal jaw?
Whose was the hand that slanted back this brow?
Whose breath blew out the light within this brain?

When the form and meaning of a single sentence can be so various,² is it not apparent that the most careful study must precede any worthy attempt at the oral interpretation of literature?

Finding the attitude. Do not suppose that attitude is a merely occasional element of speech which may or may not be present in a given sentence. Attitude is constant. Every utterance is delivered with some color or intention. If the secretary reads his minutes with bored indifference, his attitude is one of boredom and indifference. He may be representing faithfully the mood in which he wrote them. And they may not deserve any more vitality than he gives to them. But the selections we are to read are not such dry fodder. They have vitality and charm, and some of them real passion. If you read them dully and lifelessly, it is your own attitude you are expressing, not the author's, and you are not interpreting. Neither are you interpreting if you lapse into the common "reading tone," which may be varied, and in a sense expressive, but which is recognized by any listener as merely mechanical, because its variations have no relation to the changes in thought and emotion. The attitude inheres in the subject matter. It does not depend upon the

² Dr. James Rush made an extensive catalog of the various kinds of questions and described in detail how each should be spoken. See his *Philosophy of the Human Voice*, 6th ed. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1867), pp. 250-84.

whim of the reader. We are studying interpretation, not self-expression. To read ironically what your author meant to be matter of fact, to be facetious where he meant to be serious, is not to interpret at all. You might just as well write into his composition a new set of words as read into it a new set of attitudes.

How is the author's attitude to be discovered? The answer has already been given. You must study his sentences with such penetration and sympathy that you know how he felt and what he intended. A novelist, an epic poet, or a dramatist, in reporting the speeches of his characters, will tell you how they speak. He will tell you that they speak "angrily," or "sweetly," or "very mildly and submissively," or "conclusively," or "in an admonitory, patronizing tone." But the essayist and the lyric poet are not so helpful. Their attitudes you must discover for yourself. Every word of the selection must be examined thoroughly, in itself, and in relation to the tenor of the whole. A given clause or sentence may not in itself contain a clue as to the writer's attitude. Its context must be examined. Even sentences so simple as the fourth and fifth in the Ruskin selection at the end of this chapter, "He will. I know it." need careful analysis in the light of their context to determine just what Ruskin meant them to express. And often when no clue can be found anywhere you can only ask yourself how any rational person would be likely to feel about such sentiments as are expressed.

Expressing attitude. The variety and subtlety of the attitudes that are found in literature would seem to imply that their oral expression calls for more skill than the average reader is likely to command. Our voices, however, are more responsive instruments than most of us realize. They are normally capable of a great range of expression if properly stimulated, but there must be something within for them to respond to. Subtle shades of mood and meaning will be heard in the reader's voice only when they are present in his consciousness. Many elocutionists, of course, have tried to induce right expression by artificial means, by plotting the curves of inflection, and blueprinting the location of stops and the duration of syllables. But they cannot make such analyses without first understanding the meaning and feeling of the material; and it seems much more sensible and more effective to keep that meaning in mind and let it prompt expression, than to occupy the mind with

an artificial blueprint. We shall assume, then, that if expression is dull and colorless, it is because impression is dull and colorless; and if expression is inaccurate, it is because the reader doesn't understand what he is reading.

As a test of your ability to find and express attitude, try to read the following Swinburnian parody on Browning. You will need first to fill in all the missing words that are required to make complete clauses and sentences. When you have done so the meaning will still not be clear. It is not meant to be. Various attitudes, however, are plainly indicated. Give them a full range of expression and try to make this puzzle *sound* like something meaningful.

Hi! Just you drop that! Stop, I say!

Shirk work, think slink off, twist friend's wrist?
Where that spined sand's lined band's the bay
Lined blind with true sea's blue, as due—
Promising—not to pay?

For the sea's debt leaves wet the sand;
Burst worst fate's weight's in one burst gun?
A man's own yacht, blown—What? off land?
Tack back, or veer round here, then—queer!
Reef points, though—understand?

I'm blest if I do. Sigh? be blowed!
Love's doves make break life's ropes, eh? Tropes!
Faith's brig, baulked, sides caulked, rides at road;
Hope's gropes befogged, storm-dogged and bogged—
Clogged, water-logged, her load!

A vocabulary of attitudes. Students sometimes feel vaguely the correct attitude toward what they are reading, but are unable to clarify and intensify the mood because they lack a vocabulary adequate to describe it. To such students the following list of attitudes should prove helpful.

Attitudes chiefly rational—explanatory, instructive, didactic, admonitory, condemnatory, indignant, puzzled, curious, wistful, pensive, thoughtful, preoccupied, deliberate, studied, candid, guileless, thoughtless, innocent, frank, sincere, questioning, uncertain, doubting, incredulous, critical, cynical, insinuating, persuading, coaxing, pleading, persuasive, argumentative, oracular.

Attitudes of pleasure—peaceful, satisfied, contented, happy, cheerful, pleasant, bright, sprightly, joyful, playful, jubilant, elated, enraptured.

Attitudes of pain—worried, uneasy, troubled, disappointed, regretful, vexed, annoyed, bored, disgusted, miserable, cheerless, mournful, sorrowful, sad, dismal, melancholy, plaintive, fretful, querulous, irritable, sore, sour, sulky, sullen, bitter, crushed, pathetic, tragical.

Attitudes of passion—nervous, hysterical, impulsive, impetuous, reckless, desperate, frantic, wild, fierce, furious, savage, enraged, angry, hungry, greedy, jealous, insane.

Attitudes of self-control—calm, quiet, solemn, serious, serene, simple, mild, gentle, temperate, imperturbable, nonchalant, cool, wary, cautious.

Attitudes of friendliness—cordial, sociable, gracious, kindly, sympathetic, compassionate, forgiving, pitying, indulgent, tolerant, comforting, soothing, tender, loving, caressing, solicitous, accommodating, approving, helpful, obliging, courteous, polite, confiding, trusting.

Attitudes of unfriendliness—sharp, severe, cutting, hateful, unsocial, spiteful, harsh, boorish, pitiless, disparaging, derisive, scornful, satiric, sarcastic, insolent, insulting, impudent, belittling, contemptuous, accusing, reproving, scolding, suspicious.

Attitudes of comedy—facetious, comic, ironic, satiric, amused, mocking, playful, humorous, hilarious, uproarious.

Attitudes of animation—lively, eager, excited, earnest, energetic, vigorous, hearty, ardent, passionate, rapturous, ecstatic, feverish, inspired, exalted, breathless, hasty, brisk, crisp, hopeful.

Attitudes of apathy—inert, sluggish, languid, dispassionate, dull, colorless, indifferent, stoical, resigned, defeated, helpless, hopeless, dry, monotonous, vacant, feeble, dreaming, bored, blasé, sophisticated.

Attitudes of self-importance—impressive, profound, proud, dignified, lofty, imperious, confident, egotistical, peremptory, bombastic, sententious, arrogant, pompous, stiff, boastful, exultant, insolent, domineering, flippant, saucy, positive, resolute, haughty, condescending, challenging, bold, defiant, contemptuous, assured, knowing, cocksure.

Attitudes of submission and timidity—meek, shy, humble, docile, ashamed, modest, timid, unpretentious, respectful, apologetic, devout, reverent, servile, obsequious, grovelling, contrite, obedient, willing, sycophantic, fawning, ingratiating, deprecatory,

submissive, frightened, surprised, horrified, aghast, astonished, alarmed, fearful, terrified, trembling, wondering, awed, astounded, shocked, uncomprehending.

It is apparent at once that this list is not complete, and that it is not free from inconsistency. Though all these attitudes are stated by adjectives, some express logical and some emotional relations, some are attitudes toward what is said and some toward an opposing person or situation, some describe a state of mind and others a mood or emotion. But all are descriptions of how one may speak.

Of course one term alone is seldom adequate to describe a mood or motive, and several of these terms may need to be combined to express the right shade of meaning. For instance, you may speak with scornful boldness or with cheerful boldness, with tender apology or with ironic apology, with mournful sympathy or with inspiring sympathy. Make whatever combinations seem most accurate. The purpose of the list is merely to furnish a vocabulary of attitudes to which you may turn when the right word seems to elude you.

Please note that you cannot adequately describe an attitude as "animated," "emotional," or "passionate." What we wish to know about a speaker's utterance is the kind of animation or passion or emotion he feels. He may be animated by either courage or fear. He may speak in a passion of hate or of love.

In the somewhat didactic prose selections with which we are at present engaged, we shall need to define chiefly logical attitudes. As we progress from prose to poetry, and from poetry to drama, the necessity for studying attitude, especially emotional attitude, will become increasingly apparent. Just how important attitudes are can be demonstrated by attempting to read without attention to attitude this last stanza from Browning's dramatic monologue "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" (see p. 462):

Or, there's Satan!—one might venture
 Pledge one's soul to him, yet leave
 Such a flaw in the indenture
 As he'd miss till, past retrieve,
 Blasted lay that rose-acacia
 We're so proud of! *Hy, Zy, Hine . . .*
 'St, there's Vespers! *Plena gratiâ,*
Ave, Virgo! Gr-r-r—you swine!

Satire. A special word needs to be said of the various forms of ridicule which generally go under the name of satire. Satire is as old as literature itself, for it is supposed to have had its origin, as did poetry in general, in the rude devotions and revels of the rustics of ancient times. It seems to be common to all periods and nationalities. When Job says to his critics,³ "No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you," he is satirical. When Christ says,⁴ "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! . . . Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel," he is satirical. In general the critics of society, from Plato to H. L. Mencken, have employed some form of ridicule. And yet one frequently finds among students a prejudice against what they call "sarcasm," and an inability to read with any relish or expression the masterpieces of comedy and satire with which our language abounds. This is not the place to attempt to convert unbelievers to an acceptance of ridicule as a corrective of the follies of mankind, but something *can* be said to promote a better understanding of some of the attitudes involved in ridicule.

Ridicule is of many kinds and degrees, and, with its associated attitudes, goes by many names, such as humor, wit, comedy, satire, irony, sarcasm, raillery. Aristotle, in a passage worth quoting, distinguishes the buffoon at one extreme from the boor at the other, and suggests the appropriate manner for the reading of lively wit:

As relaxation, no less than business, enters into life, and one element of relaxation is playful diversion, it seems that here, too, there is a manner of intercourse which is in good taste. . . . In this matter as in others is it possible to go beyond, or to fall short of, the mean. Now they who exceed the proper limits in respect to the laughable seem to be buffoons and clownish, as their heart is set upon raising a laugh at any costs, and they aim at exciting laughter more than at decorous language and not giving pain to the one ridiculed. On the other hand, they who will never themselves say anything laughable, and are indignant with those who do, may be classed as boorish and rude.

People whose fun is in good taste are called witty, a name which implies their happy turns of speech. . . .

The characteristic of the mean [*i.e.* medium] state is tact. A person of tact is one who will use and listen to such language as is suitable to an honorable gentleman; for there is such language as an honorable

³ Job 12:12.

⁴ Matt. 23:23-24.

gentleman may use and listen to in the way of fun, and the fun of a gentleman is different from that of a slavish person, and, again, the fun of a cultivated from that of an uncultivated person. *Nicomachean Ethics* iv. 8.

The comedy appropriate to people of cultivation is further defined by George Meredith in a passage to be found among the selections for reading at the end of this chapter. Another statement from Meredith is given here because it, too, suggests an appropriate manner for the reading of "civilized" humor, and because it defines several different kinds of comedy.

You may estimate your capacity for comic perception by being able to detect the ridicule of them you love without loving them less; and more by being able to see yourself somewhat ridiculous in dear eyes, and accepting the correction their image of you proposes.

Each one of an affectionate couple may be willing, as we say, to die for the other, yet unwilling to utter the agreeable word at the right moment; but if the wits were sufficiently quick for them to perceive that they are in a comic situation, as affectionate couples must be when they quarrel, they would not wait for the moon or the almanac, . . . to bring back the flood-tide of tender feelings, that they should join hands and lips.

If you detect the ridicule, and your kindliness is chilled by it, you are slipping into the grasp of Satire.

If, instead of falling foul of the ridiculous person with a satiric rod, to make him writhe and shriek aloud, you prefer to sting him under a semi-caress, by which he shall in his anguish be rendered dubious whether indeed anything has hurt him, you are an engine of Irony.

If you laugh all round him, tumble him, roll him about, deal him a smack, and drop a tear on him, own his likeness to you, and yours to your neighbor, spare him as little as you shun, pity him as much as you expose, it is a spirit of Humor that is moving you.

The comic, which is the perceptive, is the governing spirit, awakening and giving aim to these powers of laughter, but it is not to be confounded with them; it enfolds a thinner form of them, differing from satire in not sharply driving into the quivering sensibilities, and from humor in not comforting them and tucking them up, or indicating a broader than the range of this bustling world to them. . . .

The laughter of satire is a blow in the back or the face. The laughter of comedy is impersonal and of unrivaled politeness, nearer a smile—often no more than a smile. It laughs through the mind, for the mind directs it; and it might be called the humor of the mind.

One excellent test of the civilization of a country, as I have said, I take to be the flourishing of the comic idea and comedy; and the test of true comedy is that it shall awaken thoughtful laughter. *On the Idea of Comedy and of the Uses of the Comic Spirit.*

In the selections that follow, this "true comedy" is represented not in the serious though often ironic preachments of Ruskin, not in the blasting satire of Mencken, too truly a "blow in the face," but rather in the wise and sympathetic insight of Clarence Day's selection, or in the harmless fooleries of Chesterton. It will be further represented in the selections of comic verse at the end of Chapter 7, and in "Miniver Cheevy" in Chapter 8. In reading these selections, try to understand and to express the authors' attitude of "thoughtful laughter" toward the follies they deplore, "mental richness rather than noisy enormity."

Structural coherence. One additional injunction is needed at this point. The selections here offered for practice have all some measure of unity, and they should be presented to your hearers as wholes. But the directions given in this and the preceding chapter may cause you to feel that you have so thoroughly analyzed a selection into its parts that all the king's horses and all the king's men can't put it together again. Too often a conscientious student's manner seems to say, "There, I've read that sentence. Now let me attack the next one." His sentences do not cohere. He has so thoroughly anatomized the selection that he is unable to synthesize its components into unity again. This fault may be corrected by a restudy of the *précis*, and a conscious attempt to get hold of the structure of the selection, so that its parts may be seen in proper relation to each other and to the whole. The entire selection must be held in the background of the mind while each part is being read, so that the hearers may understand its growth and its interconnections. A "thinking in" of connective and transitional expressions between phrases, a regard for climax, parallelism, contrast, and the like, and an awareness both of basic attitude and of changes in attitude, will be helpful. The mind-stretching necessary for a complete *con-ception*, or gripping-together, of even these short selections may be difficult, and even painful, but it is very much worth while.

PLAN OF STUDY

12. Note carefully the attitude of the author toward what he is saying. That is, how does he intend that it be received? Is the attitude primarily logical or emotional?

13. Define the attitude of each group in the most exact terms you can find.

14. Invent appropriate exclamations and asides to be inserted between phrases. Employing these in practice will help you to feel, and so to express, the correct attitude.

15. Watch carefully for satire or any other kind of ridicule. Be very sure that you know just what is being ridiculed, and in what degree.

16. Practice reading aloud with your mind on the author's attitudes. Cultivate a critical ear for your own vocal responsiveness to mood and idea.

17. After your analysis give special attention again to the structure of the whole selection. As you read each part of it are you aware of its relation to the whole? Study your précis until you can hold the entire content in mind at once.

CRITERIA

14. Did the reader reveal a distinct attitude toward what he read, or did he fail to show how he felt about it?

15. Was his attitude correct? That is, was it the attitude which the author evidently held?

16. Did it vary with the varying mood of the text, or was the reader guilty of emotional drifting?

17. Did the reader reveal a grasp of the structure of the whole selection, or did he read it piecemeal?

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What is *attitude* in oral interpretation?
2. How tell a question from an assertion?
3. Distinguish between logical and emotional attitudes.
4. What are some clues to an author's attitude?
5. Discuss the relation of expression to impression.
6. Name some forms of ridicule and distinguish between them.
7. Define the Aristotelian mean between buffoonery and boorishness.
8. How does Meredith define the comic spirit?

SELECTION FOR DRILL

THE RIGHTS OF THE POOR

From UNTO THIS LAST, IV

John Ruskin

1. In all the ranges of human thought I know none so melancholy as the speculations of political economists on the population question. 2. It is proposed to better the condition of the labourer by giving him higher wages. 3. "Nay," says the economist,—“if you raise his wages, he will either people down to the same point of misery at which you found him, or drink your wages away.” 4. He will. 5. I know it. 6. Who gave him this will? 7. Suppose it were your own son of whom you spoke, declaring to me that you dared not take him into your firm, nor even give him his just labourer's wages, because if you did he would die of drunkenness, and leave half a score of children to the parish. 8. "Who gave your son these dispositions?"—I should enquire. 9. Has he them by inheritance or by education? 10. By one or other they *must* come; and as in him, so also in the poor. 11. Either these poor are of a race essentially different from ours, and unredeemable (which, however often implied, I have heard none yet openly say), or else by such care as we have ourselves received, we may make them continent and sober as ourselves—wise and dispassionate as we are—models arduous of imitation. 12. "But," it is answered, "they cannot receive education." 13. Why not? 14. That is precisely the point at issue. 15. Charitable persons suppose that the worst fault of the rich is to refuse the people meat; and the people cry for their meat, kept back by fraud, to the Lord of Multitudes. 16. Alas! It is not meat of which the refusal is cruelest, or to which the claim is validest. 17. The life is more than the meat. 18. The rich not only refuse food to the poor; they refuse wisdom; they refuse virtue; they refuse salvation. 19. Ye sheep without shepherd, it is not the pasture that has been shut from you, but the Presence. 20. Meat! perhaps your right to that may be pleadable; but other rights have to be pleaded first. 21. Claim your crumbs from the table if you will; but claim them as children, not as dogs; claim your right to be fed, but claim more loudly your right to be holy, perfect, and pure. 22. Strange words to be used of working people! 23. "What! holy; without any long robes or anointing oils; these rough-jacketed, rough-

worded persons; set to nameless, dishonoured service? 24. Perfect!—these with dim eyes and cramped limbs, and slowly wakening minds? 25. Pure!—these, with sensual desire and grovelling thought; foul of body and coarse of soul?” 26. It may be so; nevertheless, such as they are, they are the holiest, perfectest, purest persons the earth can at present show. 27. They may be what you have said; but if so, they yet are holier than we who have left them thus.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS: Criticize this précis: “Nothing is so depressing as economists’ theories about the poor. Don’t raise wages, they say, for that will only lead to larger families and more drunkenness. Of course it will. But why? Suppose you said that of your son. *Why* is this true? I should ask. Because of heredity or training? Either the poor are an alien race and beyond hope, or else by training similar to ours we can bring them up to our high level of virtue. But they can’t be educated, it is said. That is the issue. The great evil is not that the rich deny food to the poor, but that they deny opportunity for spiritual development. Poor sheep! You have a right to food, but a much greater right to equality and self-improvement.

“But is holiness possible for these crude laborers? Can these animal bodies attain perfection? Can such sensual creatures be pure? Perhaps not. But at least they are better than we who have neglected them.”

1. The “population question” is the question of what to do with the surplus poor. 2. “It is proposed” by whom? 3. How does the economist speak? With exaggerated plausibility, with smug complacency, with patience or impatience, or with schoolmasterly exposition? 4, 5. Are these reluctant concessions, or dogged assertions to be followed by a challenge in 6? 7. Note that most of this is echo. 8. Is there a touch of slyness in this question? 10. The first half of this sentence may be argumentative, but don’t miss the sympathy in the second half. 11. Note how the attitude changes toward the end of this sentence. Just where does the irony begin? Will a pause help you to make the change? Does Ruskin weaken the force of his assertion in the first part of the sentence by adding this ironic fling at the morality of his own class? 12. Note that the centre of emphasis is on “receive.” 13. Is this mere inquiry, or challenge? If challenge, in what mood? Indignant? Self-righteous? Defiant? Argumentative? 15. See the epistle of James 5:4, 16. You will avoid trouble with “Alas!” if your mood binds it closely to what follows. 17. Do you feel a climax in this ringing assertion of the fundamental tenet of Christian philosophy? Do not neglect this sentence. See Matthew 6:25. 18. See Matthew 9:36. 19–21. Take pains to define the mood here. This is more than mere explanation. There should be deep sympathy and indignation. 22–25. These are not your sentiments, but your hearers’. What is their mood? Incredulity? Astonishment? Scorn? Surprise? Whatever it is, remember that you only echo it. You will get the point of view if you insert “You say” before each sentence. 26. “It may be so” is concession, but in what mood? 27. Don’t miss the solemn reproach, condemnation, and shame in this strong emotional climax.

SELECTIONS FOR PRACTICE

THE COMIC SPIRIT

From ON THE IDEA OF COMEDY AND OF THE USES OF THE COMIC SPIRIT

George Meredith

If you believe that our civilization is founded in common sense (and it is the first condition of sanity to believe it), you will, when contemplating men, discern a Spirit overhead; not more heavenly than the light flashed upward from glassy surfaces, but luminous and watchful; never shooting beyond them, nor lagging in the rear; so closely attached to them that it may be taken for a slavish reflex, until its features are studied. It has the sage's brows, and the sunny malice of a faun lurks at the corners of the half-closed lips drawn in an idle wariness of half-tension. That slim feasting smile, shaped like the long-bow, was once a big round satyr's laugh, that flung up the brows like a fortress lifted by gunpowder. The laugh will come again, but it will be of the order of the smile, finely-tempered, showing sunlight of the mind, mental richness rather than noisy enormity. Its common aspect is one of unsolicitous observation, as if surveying a full field and having leisure to dart on its chosen morsels, without any fluttering eagerness. Men's future upon earth does not attract it; their honesty and shapeliness in the present does; and whenever they wax out of proportion, overblown, affected, pretentious, bombastical, hypocritical, pedantic, fantastically delicate; whenever it sees them self-deceived or hoodwinked, given to run riot in idolatries, drifting into vanities, congregating in absurdities, planning short-sightedly, plotting dementedly; whenever they are at variance with their professions, and violate the unwritten but perceptible laws binding them in consideration one to another; whenever they offend sound reason, fair justice; are false in humility or mined with conceit, individually, or in the bulk; the Spirit overhead will look humanely malign, and cast an oblique light on them, followed by volleys of silvery laughter. That is the Comic Spirit.

TABLOID POISON *

Henry Seidel Canby

We no longer exploit the bodies of the masses—at least in America—they are too powerful. We exploit their minds.

* From the *Saturday Review of Literature*, Feb. 19, 1927, by permission of the editor.

Universal education made industrial slavery difficult, but mental slavery easy. Literacy had to come before real education. So the nation became literate, and the exploiter, who always hangs upon the wings of progress, saw his golden opportunity. That new black plague, the tabloid, began to prey upon the exploitable.

Distort the world until its news is all murder, divorce, crime, passion, and chicanery. To the poor struggling upward present the spaces above as tenanted by witless millionaires and shallow adventuresses, contemptible yet glorious in their spending. Sentimentalize everything with cynicism just beneath. In place of the full life, or the good life, or the hard life of experience, fill the mind with a phantasmagoria where easy wealth, sordid luxury, scandal, degeneracy, and drunken folly swirl through the pages in an intoxicating vulgarity. Send the children to school to learn to read and then give them this poison liquor, and what will you get in twenty years of it?

In the last war there were regiments of poor stunted devils, syphilitic, tubercular, crooked in body, incapable of anything but menial work and the kind of fighting where hopeless endurance counts. They were the grandchildren of the factory slaves. What will the grandchildren of the tabloid readers be like? Healthy of body, perhaps, for this exploitation is by flattery; not poor, not oppressed, for it is their economic power that makes them exploitable; but in emotions, ideals, intelligence, either wrought into fantastic shapes or burnt out altogether. Soiled minds, rotten before they are ripe.

CHILDISH ADULTS

*From A PREFACE TO MORALS **

Walter Lippmann

When a childish disposition is carried over into an adult environment the result is a radically false valuation of that environment. The symptoms are fairly evident. They may appear as a disposition to feel that everything which happens to a man has an intentional relation to himself; life becomes a kind of conspiracy to make him happy or to make him miserable. In either case it is thought to be deeply concerned with his destiny. The childish pattern appears also as a deep sense that life owes him something, that somehow it is the duty of the universe to look after him, and to listen sharply when he speaks to it. The notion that the universe is full of purposes utterly unknown to him, utterly indifferent to him, is as outrageous to one who is imper-

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fectly matured as would be the conduct of a mother who forgot to give a hungry child its lunch. The childish pattern appears also as a disposition to believe that he may reach out for anything in sight and take it, and that having gotten it nobody must ever under any circumstances take it away. Death and decay are, therefore, almost an insult, a kind of mischief in the nature of things, which ought not to be there, and would not be there, if everything behaved as good little boys believe it should. There is indeed authority for the belief that we are all being punished for the naughtiness of our first grandmother; that work and trouble and death would not really be there to plague us but for her unhappy transgression; that by rights we ought to live in paradise and have everything we want for ever and ever.

THE LOQUACIOUS MAN

*From CHARACTERS **

Theophrastus

Loquacity, if one should wish to define it, would seem to be an incontinence of talk.

The Loquacious Man is one who will say to those whom he meets, if they speak a word to him, that they are quite wrong, and *he* knows all about it, and that, if they listen to him, they will learn; then, while one is answering him, he will put in, "Do you tell me so?—don't forget what you are going to say"; or "Thanks for reminding me"; or "How much one gets from a little talk, to be sure!"; or "By-the-bye"—; or "Yes! you have seen it in a moment"; or "I have been watching you all along to see if you would come to the same conclusion as I did"; and other such cues will he make for himself, so that his victim has not even breathing-time. Aye, and when he has prostrated a few lonely stragglers, he is apt to march next upon large, compact bodies, and to rout them in the midst of their occupations. Indeed, he will go into the schools and the palaestras, and hinder the boys from getting on with their lessons, by chattering at this rate to the trainers and masters. When people say that they are going, he loves to escort them, and see them safe into their houses. On learning the news from Ecclesia, he hastens to report it; and to relate, in addition, the old story of the battle in Aristophon (the orator)'s year, and of the Lacedaemonian victory in Lysander's time; also of the speech for which he himself once got glory in the Assembly; and he will throw in some abuse of "the masses," too,

* This and the following selection are from the Jebb translation. Theophrastus was a Greek philosopher of the third century, B.C.

in the course of his narrative; so that the hearers will either forget what it was about, or fall into a doze, or desert him in the middle and make their escape. Then, on a jury, he will hinder his fellows from coming to a verdict, at a theatre from seeing the play, at a dinner-party, from eating; saying that "it is hard for a chatterer to be silent," and that this tongue *will* run, and that he could not hold it, though he should be thought a greater chatterer than a swallow. Nay, he will endure to be the butt of his own children, when, drowsy at last, they make their request of him in these terms—"Papa, chatter to us, that we may fall asleep!"

THE FLATTERER

From CHARACTERS

Theophrastus

Flattery may be considered as a mode of companionship degrading but profitable to him who flatters.

The Flatterer is a person who will say as he walks with another, "Do you observe how people are looking at you? This happens to no man in Athens but you. A compliment was paid to you yesterday in the Porch. More than thirty persons were sitting there; the question was started, Who is our foremost man? Everyone mentioned you first, and ended by coming back to your name." With these and the like words, he will remove a morsel of wool from his patron's coat; or, if a speck of chaff has been laid on the other's hair by the wind, he will pick it off; adding with a laugh, "Do you see? Because I have not met you for two days, you have had your beard full of white hairs; although no one has darker hair for his years than you." Then he will request the company to be silent while the great man is speaking, and will praise him, too, in his hearing, and mark his approbation at a pause with "True"; or he will laugh at a frigid joke, and stuff his cloak into his mouth as if he could not repress his amusement. He will request those whom he meets to stand still until "his Honour" has passed. He will buy apples and pears, and bring some in and give to the children in the father's presence; adding, with kisses, "Chicks of a good father." Also, when he assists at the purchase of slippers, he will declare that the foot is more shapely than the shoe. If his patron is approaching a friend, he will run forward and say, "He is coming to you"; and then, turning back, "I have announced you." He is just the person, too, who can run errands to the women's market without drawing breath. He is the first of the guests to praise the wine; and to say,

as he reclines next the host, "How delicate is your fare!" and (taking something from the table) "Now this—how excellent it is!" He will ask his friend if he is cold, and if he would like to put on something more; and, before the words are spoken, will wrap him up. Moreover he will lean toward his ear and whisper with him; or will glance at him as he talks to the rest of the company. He will take the cushions from the slave in the theatre, and spread them on the seat with his own hands. He will say that his patron's house is well built, that his land is well planted, and that his portrait is like.

In short the Flatterer may be observed saying and doing all things by which he conceives that he will gain favour.

THE MASCULINE BAG OF TRICKS

*From IN DEFENSE OF WOMEN **

H. L. Mencken

What men, in their egotism, constantly mistake for a deficiency of intelligence in woman is merely an incapacity for mastering that mass of small intellectual tricks, that complex of petty knowledges, that collection of cerebral rubber-stamps, which constitutes the chief mental equipment of the average male. A man thinks that he is more intelligent than his wife because he can add up a column of figures more accurately, and because he understands the imbecile jargon of the stock market, and because he is able to distinguish between the ideas of rival politicians, and because he is privy to the minutiae of some sordid and degrading business or profession, say soap-selling or the law. But these empty talents, of course, are not really signs of a profound intelligence; they are, in fact, merely superficial accomplishments, and their acquirement puts little more strain on the mental powers than a chimpanzee suffers in learning how to catch a penny or scratch a match. The whole bag of tricks of the average business man, or even of the average professional man, is inordinately childish. It takes no more actual sagacity to carry on the everyday hawking and haggling of the world, or to ladle out its normal doses of bad medicine and worse law, than it takes to operate a taxicab or fry a pan of fish. No observant person, indeed, can come into close contact with the general run of business and professional men—I confine myself to those who seem to get on in the world, and exclude the admitted failures—without marveling at their intellectual lethargy, their incurable ingenuousness, their appalling lack of ordinary sense. The late Charles Francis Adams, a grandson of

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one American President and a great-grandson of another, after a long lifetime in intimate association with some of the chief business "geniuses" of that paradise of traders and usurers, the United States, reported in his old age that he had never heard a single one of them say anything worth hearing. These were vigorous and masculine men, and in a man's world they were successful men, but intellectually they were all blank cartridges.

THE CHARACTER OF THE SOPHIST

*From TWO VIEWS OF EDUCATION **

Lane Cooper

To the Greeks—to Plato, for example—a Sophist was one who professed to have wisdom in general, and to be able to make other men wise, though he himself had no thorough knowledge of any one thing. For a substantial consideration, he would give you general culture with no special effort on his side, while you yourself were not under the painful necessity of learning anything in particular. He discoursed, or, as we would say, lectured; and you merely listened in delight to what he asserted. Yet to Plato the truly wise man was Socrates, who began operations by confessing his ignorance; who was swift to inquire, and reluctant to affirm; and who, when he taught, taught only the habit and method of investigation. . . . The primary trait of a Sophist is his unwillingness to admit his own ignorance. He simply lacks the courage to say "I do not know." He begins with a flat assertion, rather than a question or hypothesis; he has investigated no one subject from the bottom up, but deals in sounding generalities; and, through a show of wisdom, he deceives himself and imposes on the crowd, so that they pay him money and spread abroad his renown. . . .

Having mere scraps of classical lore, and an abysmal ignorance of the culture in the Middle Ages, he will use the words "old" and "mediaeval" as terms of censure, and "modern" as a term of unqualified praise. But his favorite word of commendation is "broad"; and his ideal man is "broad-minded," whatever that may mean—it seems to designate a person with a mind like a loose, ill-fitting shoe. He does not think that "broad" is the way that leadeth to destruction. . . . In his search for novelty of thought, he has acquired the habit of making the worse appear the better reason; he tells you that power gained by studying a subject that is hard, like Greek or mathematics, cannot be transferred to the acquisition of a subject that is easy. . . . In studies,

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he advocates the line of least resistance, which is the line of free choice from the kindergarten to the grave. He maintains that "culture" is to be had from every subject, and implies that it may be obtained as well from manual training or blacksmithing as from mathematics or Greek—or English. At all events, he will say these things so long as the crowd repeats them. . . . Finally, the Sophist cannot distinguish a man of real learning, save by a vague feeling of discomfort or apprehension when they meet, and a sense of being on his guard.

SIMIAN FEARS

*From THIS SIMIAN WORLD **

Clarence Day

A second typical weakness of this race will come from their fears. They are not either self-sufficing or gallant enough to travel great roads without cringing,—clear-eyed, unafraid. They are finely made, but not nobly made,—in that sense. They will therefore have a too urgent need of religion. Few primates have the courage to face—alone—the still inner mysteries: Infinity, Space and Time. They will think it too terrible, they will feel it would turn them to water, to live through unearthly moments of vision without creeds or beliefs. So they'll get beliefs first. Ah, poor creatures! The cart before the horse! Ah, the blasphemy (pitiful!) of their seeking high spiritual temples, with god-maps or bibles about them, made below in advance! Think of their entering into the presence of Truth, declaring so loudly and boldly that they know her already, yet far from willing to stand or fall by her flames—to rise like a phoenix or die as an honorable cinder!—but creeping in, clad in their queer blindfolded beliefs, designed to shield them from her stern, bright tests! Think of Truth sadly—or merrily—eyeing such worms!

FEAR OF NEIGHBORS

From HERETICS †

G. K. Chesterton

If we were tomorrow morning snowed up in the street in which we live, we should step suddenly into a much larger and much wilder

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world than we have ever known. And it is the whole effort of the typically modern person to escape from the street in which he lives. First he invents modern hygiene and goes to Margate. Then he invents modern imperialism and goes to Timbuctoo. He goes to the fantastic borders of the earth. He pretends to shoot tigers. He almost rides on a camel. And in all this he is still essentially fleeing from the street in which he was born; and of this flight he is always ready with his own explanation. He says he is fleeing from his street because it is dull; he is lying. He is really fleeing from his street because it is a great deal too exciting; it is exciting because it is exacting; it is exacting because it is alive. He can visit Venice because to him the Venetians are only Venetians; the people of his own street are men. He can stare at the Chinese because for him the Chinese are a passive thing to be stared at; if he stares at the old lady in the next garden, she becomes active. He is forced to flee in short from the too stimulating society of his equals—of free men, perverse, personal, deliberately different from himself. The street in Brixton is too glowing and overpowering. He has to soothe and quiet himself among tigers and vultures, camels and crocodiles. These creatures are indeed very different from himself. But they do not put their shape or color or custom into a decisive intellectual competition with his own. They do not seek to destroy his principles and assert their own; the stranger monsters of the suburban street do seek to do this. The camel does not contort his features into a fine sneer because Mr. Robinson has not got a hump; the cultured gentleman at No. 5 does exhibit a sneer because Robinson has not got a dado. The vulture will not roar with laughter because a man does not fly; but the major at No. 9 will roar with laughter because a man does not smoke. The complaint we commonly have to make of our neighbors is that they will not, as we express it, mind their own business. . . . What we really mean . . . is something much deeper. We do not dislike them because they have so little force and fire that they cannot be interested in themselves. We dislike them because they have so much force and fire that they can be interested in us as well. What we dread about our neighbors, in short, is not the narrowness of their horizon, but their superb tendency to broaden it. And all aversions to ordinary humanity have this general character. They are not aversions to its feebleness (as is pretended), but to its energy. The misanthropes pretend that they despise humanity for its weakness. As a matter of fact, they hate it for its strength.

SANDALS AND SIMPLICITY

*From HERETICS **

G. K. Chesterton

One great complaint, I think, must stand against the modern upholders of the simple life—the complaint that they would make us simple in the unimportant things, but complex in the important things. They would make us simple in the things that do not matter—that is, in diet, in costume, in etiquette, in economic system. But they would make us complex in the things that do matter—in philosophy, in loyalty, in spiritual acceptance, and spiritual rejection. It does not so very much matter whether a man eats a grilled tomato or a plain tomato; it does very much matter whether he eats a plain tomato with a grilled mind. The only kind of simplicity worth preserving is the simplicity of the heart, the simplicity which accepts and enjoys. There may be a reasonable doubt as to what preserves this; there can surely be no doubt that a system of simplicity destroys it. There is more simplicity in the man who eats caviar on impulse than in the man who eats grape-nuts on principle.

The chief error of these people is to be found in the very phrase to which they are most attached—"plain living and high thinking." These people do not stand in need of, will not be improved, by plain living and high thinking. They stand in need of the contrary. They would be improved by high living and plain thinking. A man approaches, wearing sandals and simple raiment, a raw tomato held firmly in his right hand, and says, "The affections of family and country alike are hindrances to the fuller development of human love;" but the plain thinker will only answer him with a wonder not untinged with admiration, "What a great deal of trouble you must have taken in order to feel like that." High living will reject the tomato. Plain thinking will equally decisively reject the idea of the invariable sinfulness of war. High living will convince us that nothing is more materialistic than to despise a pleasure as purely material. And plain thinking will convince us that nothing is more materialistic than to reserve our horror chiefly for material wounds.

The only simplicity that matters is the simplicity of the heart. If that be gone, it can be brought back by no turnips or cellular clothing; but only by tears and terror and the fires that are not quenched. If that remain, it matters very little if a few Early Victorian armchairs remain along with it. Let us put a complex entrée into a simple old gentleman;

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let us not put a simple entrée into a complex old gentleman. So long as human society will leave my spiritual insides alone, I will allow it, with a comparative submission, to work its wild will with my physical interior. I will submit to cigars. I will meekly embrace a bottle of Burgundy. I will humble myself to a hansom cab. If only by this means I may preserve to myself the virginity of the spirit, which enjoys with astonishment and fear! I do not say that these are the only methods of preserving it. I incline to the belief that there are others. But I will have nothing to do with simplicity which lacks the fear, the astonishment, and the joy alike. I will have nothing to do with the devilish vision of a child who is too simple to like toys.

THE VICE OF SNOBBERY

*From SOLILOQUIES IN ENGLAND **

George Santayana

There is a philosophical principle implied in snobbery, a principle which is certainly false if made absolute, but which fairly expresses the moral relations of things in a certain perspective. If we all really stood on different steps in a single ladder of progress, then to admire and imitate those above us and to identify ourselves with them by hook or by crook would be simply to accelerate our natural development, to expand into our higher self, and to avoid fatal abysses to the right and to the left of the path marked out for us by our innate vocation. Life would then be like the simple game which children call Follow the Leader; and this scrupulous discipleship would be perfect freedom, since the soul of our leader and our own soul that chooses him would be the same. This principle is precisely that of the transcendental philosophy where it maintains that there is but one spirit in all men, and one logical moral evolution for the world. In fact, it is the Germans rather than the English that are solemn, convinced, and universal snobs . . .

On the whole, however, snobbish sentiment and transcendental philosophy do not express the facts of nature. Men and nations do not really march in single file, as if they were being shepherded into some Noah's Ark. They have perhaps a common root and similar beginnings, but they branch out at every step into forms of life between which there is no further interchange of sap, and no common destiny. Their several fruits become incommensurable in beauty and in value, like the poetry of different languages, and more disparate the more each is perfected after its kind. The whale is not a first sketch for the butterfly,

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nor its culmination; the mind of an ox is not a fuller expression of that of a rabbit. The poet does not evolve into the general, nor *vice versa*; nor does a man, in growing further, become a woman, superior as she may be in her own way. That is why snobbery is really a vice; it tempts us to neglect and despise our proper virtues in aping those of other people. If an angel appeared to me displaying his iridescent wings and treble voice and heart fluttering with eternal love, I should say, "Certainly, I congratulate you, but I do not wish to resemble you." Snobbery haunts those who are not reconciled with themselves; evolution is the hope of the immature. You cannot be everything. Why not be what you are?

THE DUTY OF BEING HAPPY

From AN APOLOGY FOR IDLERS

Robert Louis Stevenson

Pleasures are more beneficial than duties because, like the quality of mercy, they are not strained, and they are twice blest. There must always be two to a kiss, and there may be a score in a jest; but wherever there is an element of sacrifice, the favor is conferred with pain, and, among generous people, received with confusion. There is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy. . . . A happy man or woman is a better thing to find than a five-pound note. He or she is a radiating focus of good-will; and their entrance into a room is as though another candle had been lighted. We need not care whether they could prove the forty-seventh proposition; they do a better thing than that, they practically demonstrate the great Theorem of the Liveableness of Life. Consequently, if a person cannot be happy without remaining idle, idle he should remain. It is a revolutionary precept; but thanks to hunger and the workhouse, one not easily to be abused; and within practical limits, it is one of the most incontestable truths in the whole Body of Morality. Look at one of your industrious fellows for a moment, I beseech you. He sows hurry and reaps indigestion; he puts a vast deal of activity out to interest, and receives a large measure of nervous derangement in return. Either he absents himself entirely from all fellowship, and lives a recluse in a garret, with carpet slippers and a leaden inkpot; or he comes among people swiftly and bitterly, in a contraction of his whole nervous system, to discharge some temper before he returns to work. I do not care how much or how well he works, this fellow is an evil feature in other people's lives. They would be happier if he were dead. They could easier do without his services in the Circumlocution Office, than they can tolerate his fractious

spirits. He poisons life at the well-head. It is better to be beggared out of hand by a scapegrace nephew, than daily hag-ridden by a peevish uncle.

THE MASK OF DEATH

*Editorial, NEW YORK TIMES **

When H. G. Wells wrote "The War of the Worlds," more than a generation ago, he pictured his invaders from Mars as a good deal like octopi—a brain equipped with tentacles. He could not imagine anything quite so horrible as the man in a gas mask. . . . The gas-mask man seems less human than the higher apes, yet he—or It—has eyes and a snout that are obscenely suggestive of a degraded and caricatured humanity. Behind the mask is no doubt a pleasant face, whose owner may be capable of laughter, tenderness, awe, intelligent reasoning. But it is the masks we shall see if the sirens blow and the hostile planes come over—not on soldiers alone but on women and children. If childish fingers cannot keep it adjusted properly the little wearers will die. If the mother clutches her baby too closely in the agony of her fear, its baby mask may be disarranged—and it will die.

Two huge, expressionless eyes and a snout, an imbecilic countenance that is inhuman, yet too near the human—this image, and not a heroic Mars, armorclad, terrible but beautiful, is the modern god of war. No sculptor, ridden by the nightmare hags of a twisted genius, could have carved a more shocking, a more fitting symbol.

When the drum-beats and the bugle calls begin to sound, when anger runs like a flame around the world, it is time to look again, and again, and again, till the truth burns into the brain, at the man—the creature—in the mask. And not the man alone but the mother and child also. And, as Maxwell Anderson and Lawrence Stallings asked, in the title of their great war play, "What Price Glory"—then?

NOBLE VILLAGES

From WALDEN

Henry D. Thoreau

We boast that we belong to the Nineteenth Century and are making the most rapid strides of any nation. But consider how little this village does for its own culture. I do not wish to flatter my townsmen, nor to be flattered by them, for that will not advance either of us. We need to be provoked,—goaded like oxen, as we are, into a trot. We have a com-

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paratively decent system of common schools, schools for infants only; but no school for ourselves. We spend more on almost any article of bodily aliment or ailment than on our mental aliment. It is time that we had uncommon schools, that we did not leave off our education when we begin to be men and women. It is time that villages were universities, and their elder inhabitants the fellows of universities, with leisure—if they are, indeed, so well off—to pursue liberal studies the rest of their lives. Shall the world be confined to one Paris or one Oxford forever? Cannot students be boarded here and get a liberal education under the skies of Concord? Can we not hire some Abélard to lecture to us? Alas! what with foddering the cattle and tending the store, we are kept from school too long, and our education is sadly neglected. In this country, the village should in some respects take the place of the nobleman of Europe. It should be the patron of the fine arts. It is rich enough. It wants only the magnanimity and refinement. It can spend money enough on such things as farmers and traders value, but it is thought Utopian to propose spending money for things which more intelligent men know to be far more worth. As the nobleman of cultivated taste surrounds himself with whatever conduces to his culture,—genius—learning—wit—books—paintings—statuary—music—philosophical instruments, and the like; so let the village do,—not stop short at a pedagogue, a parson, a sexton, a parish library, and three selectmen, because our Pilgrim forefathers got through a cold winter once on a bleak rock with these. To act collectively is according to the spirit of our institutions; and I am confident that, as our circumstances are more flourishing, our means are greater than the nobleman's. New England can hire all the wise men in the world to come and teach her, and board them round the while, and not be provincial at all. That is the *uncommon* school we want. Instead of noblemen, let us have noble villages of men. If it is necessary, omit one bridge over the river, go round a little there, and throw one arch at least over the darker gulf of ignorance which surrounds us.

DAN'L WEBSTER

*From THE DEVIL AND DANIEL WEBSTER **

Stephen Vincent Benét

Yes, Dan'l Webster's dead—or at least, they buried him. But every time there's a thunderstorm around Marshfield, they say you can hear his rolling voice in the hollows of the sky. And they say that if you

* From *Selected Works of Stephen Vincent Benét*, published by Rinehart and Co., Inc., copyright, 1936, by Stephen Vincent Benét.

go to his grave and speak loud and clear, "Dan'l Webster—Dan'l Webster!" the ground'll begin to shiver and the trees begin to shake. And after a while you'll hear a deep voice saying, "Neighbor, how stands the Union?" Then you better answer the Union stands as she stood, rock-bottomed and copper-sheathed, one and indivisible, or he's liable to rear right out of the ground. At least, that's what I was told when I was a youngster.

You see, for a while, he was the biggest man in the country. He never got to be President, but he was the biggest man. There were thousands that trusted in him right next to God Almighty, and they told stories about him that were like the stories of patriarchs and such. They said, when he stood up to speak, stars and stripes came right out in the sky, and once he spoke against a river and made it sink into the ground. They said, when he walked the woods with his fishing rod, Killall, the trout would jump out of the streams right into his pockets, for they knew it was no use putting up a fight against him; and, when he argued a case, he could turn on the harps of the blessed and the shaking of the earth underground. That was the kind of man he was, and his big farm up at Marshfield was suitable to him. The chickens he raised were all white meat down through the drumsticks, the cows were tended like children, and the big ram he called Goliath had horns with a curl like a morning-glory vine and could butt through an iron door. But Dan'l wasn't one of your gentlemen farmers; he knew all the ways of the land, and he'd be up by candlelight to see that the chores got done. A man with a mouth like a mastiff, a brow like a mountain and eyes like burning anthracite—that was Dan'l Webster in his prime.

MAN'S PREOCCUPATION WITH DEATH

*From MAN AND SUPERMAN **

George Bernard Shaw

The Devil. Have you walked up and down upon the earth lately? I have; and I have examined Man's wonderful inventions. And I tell you that in the arts of life man invents nothing; but in the arts of death he outdoes Nature herself, and produces by chemistry and machinery all the slaughter of plague, pestilence, and famine. . . . In the arts of peace Man is a bungler. I have seen his cotton factories and the like, with machinery that a greedy dog could have invented if it had wanted money instead of food. . . . There is nothing in Man's

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industrial machinery but his greed and sloth: his heart is in his weapons. . . .

Their imagination glows, their energies rise up at the idea of death, these people: they love it; and the more horrible it is the more they enjoy it. Hell is a place far above their comprehension: they derive their notion of it from two of the greatest fools that ever lived, an Italian and an Englishman. The Italian described it as a place of mud, frost, filth, fire, and venomous serpents: all torture. This ass, when he was not lying about me, was maundering about some woman whom he saw once in the street. The Englishman described me as being expelled from Heaven by cannons and gunpowder; and to this day every Briton believes that the whole of his silly story is in the Bible. What else he says I do not know; for it is all in a long poem which neither I nor anyone else ever succeeded in wading through.

It is the same in everything. . . . I could give you a thousand instances; but they all come to the same thing: the power that governs the earth is not the power of Life but of Death; and the inner need that has nerved Life to the effort of organizing itself into the human being is not the need for higher life but for a more efficient engine of destruction. The plague, the famine, the earthquake, the tempest were too spasmodic in their action; the tiger and crocodile were too easily satiated and not cruel enough: something more constantly, more ruthlessly, more ingeniously destructive was needed; and that something was Man, the inventor of the rack, the stake, the gallows, the electric chair; of sword and gun and poison gas; above all, of justice, duty, patriotism, and all the other isms by which even those who are clever enough to be humanely disposed are persuaded to become the most destructive of all the destroyers.

WANTED: AN AMERICAN MESSAGE

Charles Malik, Minister of Lebanon to the U. S.

One often gains the impression that the West tries to vie with Communism in Communism's own terms: for so-called "social justice," against starvation and hunger, for higher and higher standards of living. The pattern is to advocate more and more of the same kind of thing. It is always bad, however, to draw the substance of one's message from the character of one's opponent. Surely as integral heir of four thousand years of cumulative tradition America can conceive a more original message than mere economic and social advance. . . .

Not endlessly higher and higher standards of life alone; not just more and more comfortable living; not better and better material good

only; not mere control of nature: but intellectual and spiritual virtue; moral excellence; the joy of reason; the cultivation of inward depth; the control of man, including above all self-control; the perfection of man—this, I submit, belongs to what is best in America. And the greatest error of this age is to suppose that the perfection of man can come from the perfection of material things. Only an original act of the spirit, whereby the perfect man from the very beginning posits himself as our ideal and justification, can gradually induce our perfection.

The virtues that made New England and started America on the path of greatness were not primarily material; they certainly had nothing to do with comfort and pleasure. If I understand the original spirit of New England correctly, it craved for the freedom of the spirit; it trusted in God; it believed in the dignity of man and of his work; it honored frugality; it developed a sense of independence and self-reliance; it set up fixed principles and standards which it ultimately derived from Christ as judge; it promoted a wonderful community spirit, an intense feeling of belonging, as for instance in the great communities of Concord, of Cambridge, of Lexington; it took therefore special joy in giving and in sharing; it accepted risks, trusting in Providence with an inner poise and a lightness of heart which put all external busyness to shame. I believe the modern spoiled world can sit at the feet of the original New England asceticism and learn a lot.

AFFECTATION

From THE ART OF SPEAKING (1762)

James Burgh

Affectation displays itself in a thousand different gestures, motions, airs, and looks, according to the character, which the person affects. Affectation of learning gives a stiff formality to the whole person. The words come stalking out with the pace of a funeral procession; and every sentence has the solemnity of an oracle. Affectation of piety turns up the goggling whites of the eyes to heaven, as if the person were in a trance, and fixes them in that posture so long that the brain of the beholder grows giddy. Then comes up, deep-grumbling, a holy groan from the lower parts of the thorax; but so tremendous in sound, and so long protracted, that you expect to see a goblin rise, like an exhalation through the solid earth. Then he begins to rock from side to side, or backward and forward, like an aged pine on the side of a hill, when a brisk wind blows. The hands are clasped together, and often lifted, and the head often shaken with foolish vehemence. The

tone of the voice is canting, or sing-song lullaby, not much distant from an Irish howl; and the words godly doggerel. Affectation of beauty, and killing, puts a fine woman by turns into all sorts of forms, appearances, and attitudes, but amiable ones. She undoes, by art, or rather by awkwardness (for true art conceals itself) all that nature had done for her. Nature formed her almost an angel, and she, with infinite pains, makes herself a monkey. Therefore this species of affectation is easily imitated, or taken off. Make as many, and as ugly grimaces, motions, and gestures, as can be made; and take care that nature never peep out; and you represent coquettish affectation to the life.

el. my special signifier

NO EASY WAY

From ADDRESS AT CHICAGO, SEPTEMBER 29, 1952 *addressed*

Adlai Stevenson

people of Chicago

Long ago we asserted a great principle upon this continent, that men are, and of right ought to be, free. Now we are called upon to defend that right against the mightiest forces of evil ever assembled under the sun. This is, therefore, a time to think. It is a time to feel. It is a time to pray. We shall need all the resources of the stubborn mind, the stout heart, the soul refreshed, in the task that confronts us. It is the most awesome task any people has ever faced, for we have become the leader and the mainstay of one of the great wings of humanity in conflict with another wing of humanity, and as such we must play the principal part in saving ourselves, our friends and our civilization.

Whose task is this? It is inescapably your task. You, and you alone, will decide the fate of your family and your country for decades to come. You will decide whether you are to be slaves or free, live gloriously or perish miserably. You may seek comfort at the feet of false leaders, who, like medicine doctors, beat drums to ward off evil spirits. You may listen to false leaders who tell you there is an easy way, that all you have to do is to elect them and thereafter relax in a tax-free paradise—the political equivalent of sending ten cents to cover the cost of postage. You may, fearing to face the facts squarely, be distracted by phony issues that have no bearing upon the life or death controversy of our time. But deluded you run the risk of being beguiled to destruction, for there is no easy way.

There is a lesson of history and of all human experience—struggle is the primary law of life. You struggle and you survive. You fail to struggle and you perish. The ways of the world are marked with the bones of people who hesitated.

Your salvation is in your own hands, in the stubbornness of your minds, in the tenacity of your hearts, and such blessings as God, sorely tried by his children, shall give us. Nature is indifferent to the survival of the human species, including Americans. I repeat, then, that the task is yours.

Yours is a democracy. Its government cannot be stronger or more tough-minded than its people. It cannot be more inflexibly committed to the task than they. It cannot be wiser than the people. As citizens of this democracy, you are the rulers and the ruled, the lawgivers and the law abiders, the beginning and the end. Democracy is a high privilege, but it is also a heavy responsibility whose shadow stalks, although you may ever walk in the sun.

I say these things to you, not only because I believe them to be true, but also because, as you love your country, I love my country, and I would see it endure and grow in light and become a living testament to all mankind—of goodness and of mercy and of wisdom.

Chapter 4

VIVIDNESS

SO FAR we have considered in the main the means of acquiring "correctness" of expression. We have been attempting to acquire a technique of thinking upon which all our later work must be built. We have been practicing the finger exercises of expression.

Intensifying meaning. We have found that the voice will ordinarily express what the speaker understands and feels, but we must note now that sometimes it needs to be stimulated to greater liveliness and vigor. Oral reading ought never to be dull. For most occasions you will need to intensify and vivify the literal ideas recorded on the printed page, to heighten their effect, and to give them special clarity and vitality. Expression may be faithful to meaning and mood and yet lack the color and vivacity required to keep an audience alert and interested. The directions in the two preceding chapters should lead to a "correct" pattern of expression, but that pattern may be too dim to be effective. The symbols on the page are cold and lifeless. You must do more than merely announce what they are. To bring their message to life, you must give them vitality and vividness.

In doing this you will unavoidably color the author's thought with something of your own personality, but you must not alter his intention, or add anything to it, or in any way change its character. You must not push him off the page and exploit yourself instead. You must merely animate and intensify what he has said. A bright pattern may be exactly like a dim pattern, except that it is brighter. We all know how ordinary conversational clichés sometimes seem

fresh and original when uttered by a vivacious and discerning speaker. The lines of a poorly written play often acquire an unexpected vitality and significance when spoken by an accomplished actor. It is such intensification of meaning that we are now to consider. What we propose to do is like refocusing the lens of a projection machine so as to make its picture clearer, or interpreting a musical composition with a sharpness and precision that go beyond mere accuracy.

Various methods of acquiring vivacity of expression are in use among elocutionists. Some are greatly to be preferred to others, but each may in some situations have a value that others lack. Let us, therefore, examine all of them and be prepared to make use of every means that will help us to acquire more lively habits of speech.

Enriching content. In the preceding chapters we have been dealing almost exclusively with the "natural method" of expression. Before examining other methods let us first make a further application of it here, for we shall find that it may be employed effectively in our attempt to secure vividness of expression, and that it is, for college students at least, the method to be preferred. We have attempted to find the thought and attitude underlying the selection studied in order to give them correct expression. Can we not go a step further and secure a more vivid expression by deepening and enriching the thought of the writer? That is, by means of the imagination we may create images of his thought which will make it as real to us as to him, and indeed, if we wish, more real. By filling our minds with illustrations and examples of the things he has said, we may acquire a strong desire, almost a compulsion, to speak them vividly. To represent feeling, says Quintilian, "the first requisite is to impress ourselves as much as possible, to conceive lively ideas of things, and to allow ourselves to be moved by them as if they were real."¹

Let us illustrate with the selection from Stevenson's "Truth of Intercourse" at the end of this chapter. In the second sentence he says, "We are moved by physical passions and contortions." You will get the flavor of this if you call to mind and dwell upon some agony of fear or rage or hate that you have seen either in real life or on the stage. You may recall how some friend shrank from an

¹ *Institutio Oratoria* xi. 3. 62.

impending lightning bolt, or how some hungry infant expressed in a speechless paroxysm his rage at being momentarily deprived of his bottle; or you may bring to mind Hamlet's passionate hatred of his uncle. These must be conceived vividly, and held in mind until you are really moved by them. Then you may proceed to the next thought. "The voice breaks and changes." You have heard it often break with suppressed mirth, or with grief, or with pity. Bring back as vividly as you can a variety of such experiences. Recall also instances of "unconscious and winning inflections." You have seen "legible countenances," and eloquent eyes. Re-create the picture of them now until it looks eloquently through your own eyes as you speak. The figure of the dungeon and the figure of the signals from the threshold call for a slightly different treatment. What is wanted here is not so much an image of the concrete things named in the figure as a deep impression of the thought and feeling which prompted Stevenson to seek and use these figures. Instead of a girl waving from a doorway, think of specific moods, feelings, ideals, and desires which express themselves in some one's countenance.

In the third sentence the groans and tears, looks and gestures, flushes and palenesses should be so vividly conceived that your voice and manner will suggest them whether your words are heard or not. When you read in the fifth sentence that patience and justice fail us at critical times, you should have at your tongue's end instances of such failures so that you could, if permitted, expand Stevenson's thought with matter of your own. And so on throughout.

Reading, thoughtful reading, is more than a mere recognition of words and their meanings. It should rouse into life, in that storehouse of impressions and recollections we call the mind, sleeping images and impulses which may carry our attention far beyond the printed page. The imprints of the type on the page are only symbols of some of the things that passed through the author's mind. For us they can only be stimulators of things we already possess, signals that stir into action the dormant experiences of our past, and cause them to march forward into consciousness, to unite into fresh combinations, new forms, hitherto unimagined patterns. If these impressions are thronging at our lips for utterance, our voices will respond with the desired color and vibrancy.

What you should do, then, is to think and feel yourself into the selection until, as Professor Winans says, "it may come to mean as

much to you as to the author; indeed it may mean more to you. He has furnished you with a suggestive form of words; what their content shall be depends largely upon you.”² You should go through a process not unlike that which you would have gone through had you written the selection yourself.

These vivid images, these specific examples which enrich and amplify the author’s thought, should be conceived during your preliminary study of the selection. They should be held in mind during your practice readings, and again when you read before the class or any other audience. The richer this background of thought and feeling, the more vivid and expressive will your reading be.

Tone copying. A second method of brightening expression is by what has been called “tone copying.”³ This method is especially helpful in reading poetic, obsolete, or unfamiliar language, and in expressing unfamiliar sentiments as, for instance, in the plays of Shakespeare. It consists in translating such language into familiar colloquial speech, in which appropriate expression will naturally be more easily achieved, and then in attempting to transfer this pattern of expression to the unfamiliar passage. When confronted with a strange sentiment in your reading you should try to find some analogous experience in everyday life. Express your feeling about it in whatever vernacular you use most naturally, in slang if you like; then try to utter the unfamiliar sentiment in the same tone and with the same feeling.

Professor Phillips, in his “tone drills,” suggests that the mood of indignation in this passage from Julius Caesar, Act IV, scene 3:

Shall we now
Contaminate our fingers with base bribes,
And sell the mighty space of our large honors
For so much trash as may be grasped thus?
I had rather be a dog and bay the moon,
Than such a Roman.

may be created by practicing some such colloquial statement as “I never heard of anything more high-handed. It’s outrageous, scandalous.” Sometimes in order to get the flavor of a Shakespearean

²James Albert Winans, *Public Speaking* (New York: The Century Co., 1917), p. 461.

³See A. E. Phillips, *Natural Drills in Expression* (Chicago: The Newton Co., 1909).

phrase you can translate its obsolete poetic idiom into an equivalent modern phrase. "I cry you mercy," for instance, has the same meaning and flavor as our modern "I beg your pardon." "I have done, i' faith," is equivalent to "I'm through; really." (See p. 525.)

The selection from Stevenson below does not contain much that is strange or call for very deep feeling. We shall find this device more helpful when we undertake the reading of poetry. We can, however, illustrate from Stevenson. In the eighth sentence he speaks of those unfortunate stolid folk who are "made of clay," "tied for life into a bag." His attitude toward them is evidently one of sympathetic pity. If you have difficulty in reading these lines with feeling, imagine how you would express the same feeling regarding a classmate who was taken ill a month before commencement and was unable to graduate with his class. Perhaps you would say, "Too bad, old man; you've certainly had a tough break." If your imagination enables you to achieve some expressiveness on this statement, try speaking Stevenson's sentence with the same tone pattern.

Physical action. During the past half-century a new contribution to elocutionary method has come to us through the James-Lange theory of emotion and the behavioristic view of psychology. Briefly, the James-Lange theory holds that the feelings, instead of being the cause of bodily expression, are the *result* of it. The emotion we feel is caused by some motion of the body. Perhaps we had better let Professor James develop the theory:

Everybody knows how panic is increased by flight, and how the giving away to the symptoms of grief or anger increases the passions themselves. . . . In rage, it is notorious how we "work ourselves up" to a climax by repeated outbursts of expression. Refuse to express the passion and it dies. Count ten before venting your anger, and its occasion seems ridiculous. Whistling to keep up courage is no mere figure of speech. On the other hand, sit all day in a moping posture, sigh, and reply to everything with a dismal voice, and your melancholy lingers. There is no more valuable precept in moral education than this, as all who have had experience know; if we wish to conquer undesirable emotional tendencies in ourselves, we must assiduously, and in the first instance cold-bloodedly, go through the outward movements of those contrary dispositions which we prefer to cultivate. The reward of persistency will infallibly come, in the fading out of

the sullenness or depression, and the advent of real cheerfulness and kindness in their stead. Smooth the brow, brighten the eye, contract the dorsal rather than the ventral aspect of the frame, and speak in a major key, pass the genial compliment and your heart must be frigid indeed if it do not gradually thaw.⁴

The behaviorist theory points in the same direction. According to the behaviorists, the physical response is the emotion. The response is partly evident in facial expression and other outward gesture, but it is also partly concealed in glandular and visceral disturbances. We can control the outer manifestations of emotion, and by this means exercise some control over the inner responses. The same conclusion is supported by the more recent psychology of *Gestalt*, which teaches that outer and inner aspects of feeling are parts of a unified whole or pattern, and that if the pattern is begun it tends to run its full course to completion.⁵

The moral from any of these psychological theories is plain. If you find your reading colorless and apathetic, *simulate* an interest in it and this simulated interest will become genuine. The actor has more opportunity than the reader to put himself into the physical attitudes suitable for the various emotions, but the reader can at least give his muscles the *feel* of such attitudes; he can cultivate appropriate tensions and relaxations; he can, as Stevenson says, cultivate "a lively and not a stolid countenance."

To approach the matter from a slightly different angle, the reader can keep his body alive. Motion encourages emotion. Speakers at banquets and public meetings know how difficult it is to rise from a chair in which they have been sitting passively for an hour or two and speak at once with any show of feeling or animation. They could do much better if allowed to walk about hidden from the audience until their time comes to speak. Here again actors have an advantage, for they can and do work themselves into the proper emotional state before coming on the stage.

General bodily tension, alertness, or readiness will facilitate appropriate emotional responses, and sympathetically affect the intricate complex of small muscles which control the voice. It is

⁴ William James, *Psychology: Briefer Course* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1907), p. 382.

⁵ See my "Implications of Gestalt Psychology," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XIV (1928), 8-29.

well to bear in mind that these muscles, like any other part of the body, reflect general bodily slackness or tonicity. Keep physically alert. Keep "on your toes." It may sound childish, but it is none the less true that you would read with increased animation if previously set to dancing about the room or put through five minutes of calisthenics.

Another aspect of physical expression is of even greater importance. A feeling of physical alertness will, as I have said, stimulate the voice to greater expressiveness, but it should have an even more important result in that outward physical expressiveness which is the theme of Stevenson's discussion below. Any reader who is visible to his audience communicates with them through two channels, the eye and the ear. His voice is heard while his person is seen. His facial expression, his movements of hand and head, his general physical responses, should carry to his hearers' eyes the same impressions that his voice carries to their ears. If there is disagreement between vocal and visible expression, the hearers will inevitably be confused. Our expression should be coherent and unified with all the channels of communication in use, and all carrying the same message.

We need not bother our heads about traditional systems of gesture, about stereotyped positions of hands and head, except to avoid them. It is these that have helped to make public elocution a reproach. But we do need to concern ourselves with general bodily responsiveness, especially with the cultivation of a "lively play of facial expression." We need to recognize that our civilized environment has imposed upon us thousands of repressions and inhibitions which check our natural free responsiveness. From babyhood we have been told to sit still, to stop wriggling, to speak softly, if at all. During ten or twelve years of schooling we have sat rigidly in rows, suppressing all the activity of body and face normal to children. Our crowded, hurried, conventional society encourages further repressions. Natural enthusiasms are checked because we do not want to "make a scene," or "make fools of ourselves," or "slop over." The result is in many cases that we have almost lost the power of expression.

We must set ourselves to counteract these deadening influences. We must try to recover some of the normal spontaneity of childhood. We must cultivate a free facial and gestural vivacity, such

as is exemplified by the better screen actors, until we have "looks to correspond with every feeling," and "never discredit speech with uncouth manners or become unconsciously our own burlesques." As you read Stevenson's selection try to *feel* it in every muscle, not forgetting that most important muscle called the heart. Try to pantomime every suggested image and emotion. Don't be afraid to let yourself go. You can depend upon the teacher and the class to check you if, as isn't likely, you become too wild.

Communication. This last thought suggests that speech may sometimes be vivified by developing a strong sense of communication. Reading is sometimes colorless because it is weak. The necessity of communicating his thoughts to an audience will nearly always stimulate the reader to more vigor of expression, if nothing more; and though mere loudness is not a virtue, yet for many timid readers a more vigorous utterance is the beginning of progress toward expressiveness. If we can develop an urge to communicate, an eagerness to have our thought understood and appreciated by one or more hearers, there is a spontaneous brightening of the pattern of expression. This is especially true when we feel that our hearers are a little dull of comprehension, a little unsympathetic, or a little hard of hearing, and is best illustrated in our reading to children. Think of the variety and fervor with which even a poor reader will begin the story of the three bears. "Once upon a time" acquires suddenly an almost miraculous glow. The reader is seldom himself interested in the story, but he is interested in the children. Many a patient mother takes up the familiar storybook each night with a positive nausea toward the stories, but she reads with charm and spirit because of her never-failing interest in noting their effect upon her children. See if you cannot develop toward your hearers this *urge to communicate*, this ardent desire to have your author's thought *received*. Your manner should constantly reveal to them such attitudes as "I want you to get this," "Have I made myself clear?" "Isn't that true?" and "What do you think of that?" Think these things, or actually say them under your breath, between sentences. But let them be, not artificial, but the product of a deeply felt desire to have your hearers appreciate and enjoy what you read.

Exaggeration. Another device for brightening the pattern of expression may prove of value. As you read aloud the first sentence

of the Stevenson selection, you will note that your voice has created a vocal pattern. "Life is not entirely carried on by literature." A second reading will reproduce substantially the same pattern. Study this pattern carefully and see if you cannot analyze it into some of its constituents. Let us assume that your expression of the thought is substantially correct. What we wish to do is not to alter the pattern, but to try to make it more distinct, to intensify its shades and colors. You will probably find that you have given most weight to the words *life*, *entirely*, and *literature*. Try reading the sentence again, *increasing* the pressure on these words. You may find also that you hesitate for an instant after *life*, and again before *by literature*. Try another reading in which you increase slightly the duration of these stops. Then you may find that in your original pattern the vocal pitch rises to a kind of peak on the accented syllable of *entirely*, that it declines on *carried on*, and that it rises again on the first syllable of *literature*. Build these peaks higher, and carve the depressions deeper. If you detect in your vocal pattern any suggestion of an attitude, intensify it, develop it, nourish it. In general, then, try to brighten and intensify the pattern of speech which you find yourself using on each phrase and sentence when you read it as instructed in previous chapters. This may be but little better than saying, "Read more expressively," but that little may be helpful to some, and the method is set down here for what it may be worth.

Artificial manipulation of the elements of voice. Aristotle's all too brief discussion of the art of delivery⁶ mentions three elements of voice: volume, harmony, and rhythm. Modern authors of elocutionary systems use more frequently the terms *force*, *pitch*, and *time* or *tempo*, and they add a fourth element, *quality*. All vocal variety can be analyzed into changes in these four elements.

It is obvious that speech sounds vary in *force*. We have not simply accented and unaccented syllables, but we have an almost infinite gradation of accents. It is obvious also that force may be applied to a syllable steadily or intermittently, and that it may be strongest at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of a syllable. Then, too, some phrases are spoken with more volume than others.

Our speech varies also in *pitch* or *melody* in good speech almost as much as in song. Some syllables are higher, some lower, and

⁶ Aristotle *Rhetoric* iii. 1.

nearly all have a glide which carries the voice up or down, or perhaps both up and down. An unimportant word or phrase, such as a parenthesis, is commonly uttered in a lower pitch than its context, and any word or syllable or phrase which we wish to emphasize generally receives a higher pitch.

Changes in *time*, *tempo*, or *rhythm* are also apparent in good speech. The rate of utterance varies with the occasion, with the mood of the speaker, with the nature of the content uttered, etc. Some syllables are held longer than others, and the pauses between phrases are of various durations.

Changes in vocal *quality* are more difficult to define, but they are none the less present. Elocutionary systems designate various qualities by such terms as normal, orotund, aspirate, guttural, falsetto, and the like.

It is scarcely to be questioned that variety in all these elements is desirable, but it is to be questioned whether it can best be secured by giving attention to them separately, or whether any system of rules or principles of variation will not lead to affectation and artificiality. Suppose it is true that the normal pitch curve of a word spoken with sarcasm takes a course something like a letter "s" lying on its side. Will you speak better by thinking of this vocal roller-coaster, or by thinking of the sarcastic import of your words? Suppose it is true that great emphasis can be given a word by dropping it an octave in pitch, as a prominent actor did the word "perturbed" in Hamlet's line "Rest, rest, perturbed spirit." Can you do such things mechanically and make them sound natural? Whatever use you make of this method must be made cautiously. It will probably be best to let quality entirely alone. Pitch variety is very important, but may best be secured by some of the methods discussed above, or by drills to increase vocal flexibility, which will be given later. As to force and time, you will be safest if you proceed by the method suggested above in the section on exaggeration. Many readers have formed the habit of measuring out their syllables in equal weights and lengths. This deadly monotony is to be by all means avoided, and when other methods fail, a resort to conscious application of these elements of time and force may be wise.

Imitation. This last method of vivifying expression, the mere copying of someone else's vocal pattern, is for us the least worthy.

Granted that we first learned to speak by imitating our parents, and that throughout history thousands of public reciters, actors, and orators have learned by imitating their teachers or their predecessors or associates, yet for students of college intelligence the method is too childish. Any method employed by mature students should be based upon understanding, not upon merely copying a pattern, valuable as that practice is. The one who imitates, and the one who works by the mechanical method, may read well those selections on which they have been drilled, but away from their teacher and confronted with new material they are helpless.

It must be granted, however, that a student who is not familiar with the normal patterns of American speech, such as the foreign student, or the native who knows only a narrow local idiom, has no recourse but to depend upon his teacher or others for models. Let it be granted also that any student will profit by hearing occasionally, and imitating, a pattern of expression better than any he can himself create. Even in college a teacher who is a good reader may, and perhaps should, "set a pattern" for his pupils. What I am warning against is a method which is satisfied with merely saying, "Read as I read, and you will read well," a method which must always leave the student with no capacity for independent self-improvement.

PLAN OF STUDY

18. Find in your past experience concrete instances of the truth of every statement you are to read. Work out in detail all the images suggested. Dwell upon them until they are vivid and real. Hold them in mind while reading.

19. Translate unfamiliar sentiments and expressions into colloquial speech and practice expressing them vigorously. Then try to transfer these familiar patterns of expression to the unfamiliar words of your author.

20. Practice reading the selection while striding vigorously about, gesticulating extravagantly. Pantomime dramatically every possible idea and feeling. Lay the expression on thick. All this, of course, is for private practice only. In public, cultivate as much bodily movement as the occasion permits. Especially encourage facial expression. If past training has led you to suppress your feelings, try now to give them free rein.

21. Practice the selection as if reading to deaf old ladies, or to a large assembly of immature children whose attention you had to hold. Before the class, insist upon having attention; never allow your hearers to become indifferent.

22. Note carefully in each sentence the pattern of your normal reading. Try to brighten your expression by deliberately exaggerating this pattern.

23. Are there places where you can brighten expression by somewhat mechanical changes in rate, intensity, quality, and time?

24. If you are not sure of the "normality" of your own speech, listen carefully to those who do read and speak well, trying to train your ear to detect and your voice to imitate the patterns of good speech.

CRITERIA

18. Was the reader alertly responsive to the mood and imagery of what he read, or was he lifeless and inert?

19. Did his reading have the ring of genuineness? Was it *real*?

20. Was there free physical responsiveness to the content of the selection, expressed in pantomime, gesture, muscle tension, facial expression, etc.?

21. Did the reader seem eager to have what he read received by his hearers, or was he indifferent?

22. Was the pattern of expression vivid and clear, or dull and monotonous?

23. Was there variety in rate, force, quality, and pitch of voice?

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Is "correct" reading always adequate?
2. Define vividness of expression.
3. How may the natural method be used to intensify meaning and promote vividness?
4. What is "tone copying" and how can it be used in interpretation?
5. Is physical action necessary to vivid interpretation? Explain.
6. Explain and illustrate how expression may be vivified by developing a strong sense of communication; by exaggeration; by manipulating the elements of voice.
7. What is the objection to imitation as a method of improving expression?

SELECTION FOR DRILL

TRUTH OF INTERCOURSE

From TRUTH OF INTERCOURSE

Robert Louis Stevenson

1. Life is not entirely carried on by literature. 2. We are subject to physical passions and contortions; the voice breaks and changes, and speaks by unconscious and winning inflections; we have legible countenances, like an open book; things that cannot be said look eloquently through the eyes; and the soul, not locked into the body as a dungeon, dwells ever on the threshold with appealing signals. 3. Groans and tears, looks and gestures, a flush or a paleness, are often the most clear reporters of the heart, and speak more directly to the hearts of others. 4. The message flies by these interpreters in the least space of time, and the misunderstanding is averted in the moment of its birth. 5. To explain in words takes time and a just and patient hearing; and in the critical epochs of a close relation, patience and justice are not qualities on which we can rely. 6. But the look or gesture explains things in a breath; they tell their message without ambiguity. . . .

7. Pitiful is the case of the blind, who cannot read the face; pitiful that of the deaf, who cannot follow the changes of the voice. 8. And there are others also to be pitied; for there are some of an inert, uneloquent nature, who have been denied all the symbols of communication, who have neither a lively play of facial expression, nor speaking gestures, nor a responsive voice, nor yet the gift of frank, explanatory speech: people truly made of clay, people tied for life into a bag which no one can undo. 9. Such people we must learn slowly by the tenor of their acts, or through yea and nay communications; or we take them on trust on the strength of a general air, and now and again, when we see the spirit breaking through in a flash, correct or change our estimate. 10. But these will be uphill intimacies, without charm or freedom, to the end; and freedom is the chief ingredient in confidence. 11. Some minds, romantically dull, despise physical endowments. 12. That is a doctrine for a misanthrope; to those who like their fellow-creatures it must always be meaningless; and, for my part, I can see few things more desirable, after the possession of such radical qualities as honor and humor and pathos, than to have a lively and not a stolid counte-

nance; to have looks to correspond with every feeling; to be elegant and delightful in person, so that we shall please in the intervals of active pleasing, and may never discredit speech with uncouth manners or become unconsciously our own burlesques. 13. But of all unfortunates there is one creature (for I will not call him man) conspicuous in misfortune. 14. This is he who has forfeited his birthright of expression, who has cultivated artful intonations, who has taught his face tricks, like a pet monkey, and on every side perverted or cut off his means of communication with his fellow-men. 15. The body is a house of many windows: there we all sit, showing ourselves and crying on the passers-by to come and love us. 16. But this fellow has filled his window with opaque glass, elegantly colored. 17. His house may be admired for its design, the crowd may pause before the stained windows, but meanwhile the poor proprietor must lie languishing within, uncomforted, unchangeably alone.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS: Criticise this précis: "Communication is not by words alone, but by bodily, vocal, and facial expression. These are often the most immediate means of communication. Verbal explanations involve delay, and require a patience and justice of which we cannot be sure in a crisis. We should pity the blind and deaf, but also the inert and unexpressive. With such people acquaintance is slow, uncertain, and difficult. Some despise personal attractiveness. But if we love our fellows we must value vivacity and charm of appearance and expression. Most unfortunate is he who hides his real self by falsifying his expression. We all crave sympathy, but this fellow must lack it because he will not permit himself to be known."

(Numbers refer to sentences) Look well at these words, and make sure that you can pronounce and define them: epoch, gesture, ambiguity, inert, tenor, misanthrope, radical, stolid, burlesque, uncouth. 1. The meaning is, communication is not entirely carried on by language. 2. Note that this amplifies and particularizes 1, the particulars being summarized again in the last clause. Note the contrast between the two contiguous words "look" and "said." 3. The details in 3 are echoes of those in 2. The new idea is "most clear." 4. "Flies" is not an important idea. 5. Note the contrast of "words" with "look or gesture" in 6. Is "ambiguity" echo or new idea? 8. Note that "symbols of communication" is echo. Does that throw the stress upon "all"? 9. What are "yea and nay communications"? The phrase "in a flash" is not important. 11. Note that "physical endowments" is echo. 12. "Like" is contrasted with what? What are "intervals of active pleasing"? 13. Note that "misfortune" echoes "unfortunates"; the important word is "conspicuous." 14. "Expression" is not a new idea; it is the theme of the whole selection. 15. Interpret "crying on the passers-by to come and love us." 17. What is more important: that the proprietor is within, or that he lies languishing?

SELECTIONS FOR PRACTICE

THE MEANING OF WAR

From SARTOR RESARTUS

Thomas Carlyle

What, speaking in quite unofficial language, is the net-purport and upshot of war? To my own knowledge, for example, there dwell and toil, in the British village of Dumdrudge, usually some five-hundred souls. From these, by certain "Natural Enemies" of the French, there are successively selected, during the French war, say thirty able-bodied men: Dumdrudge, at her own expense, has suckled and nursed them; she has, not without difficulty and sorrow, fed them up to manhood, and even trained them to crafts, so that one can weave, another build, another hammer, and the weakest can stand under thirty stone avoirdupois. Nevertheless, amid much weeping and swearing, they are selected; all dressed in red; and shipped away, at the public charges, some two-thousand miles, or say only to the south of Spain; and fed there till wanted. And now to that same spot in the south of Spain, are thirty similar French artisans, from a French Dumdrudge, in like manner wending: till at length, after infinite effort, the two parties come into actual juxtaposition: and Thirty stands fronting Thirty, each with a gun in his hand. Straightway the word "Fire!" is given: and they blow the souls out of one another; and in place of sixty brisk useful craftsmen, the world has sixty dead carcasses, which it must bury, and anew shed tears for. Had these men any quarrel? Busy as the Devil is, not the smallest! They lived far enough apart; were the entirest strangers; nay, in so wide a Universe, there was even unconsciously, by Commerce, some mutual helpfulness between them. How then? Simpleton! their Governors had fallen-out; and, instead of shooting one another, had the cunning to make these poor blockheads shoot.

FREEDOM

From DEMOCRACY

John Stuart Blackie

It is certainly true that birds were not made for cages, and that to be a natural, normal, proper bird, a winged creature ought to be allowed to fly. So man, in order to be man, and no chattel, must be free. A civil society of slaves is nonsense in the statement. Only freemen, as

Aristotle teaches, can constitute a State. But freedom does not mean absolute freedom; on the contrary, it rather means only the equal acknowledgement of just and fair restraints. Mere liberty, though a very great thing to a bird, is the first and lowest and smallest condition of human society. Freedom, however much belauded, is, in fact, that quality or function which man shares in common with children, savages, madmen, and wild beasts. All these naturally rejoice only in freedom, and disown all restraint. The imposition of restraints upon liberty is the first great act of civilisation; and to increase restrictions is, in the general case, to make progress in legislation. . . . Not freedom but order is the grand distinctive principle of civil society. God made the world, by freedom certainly, in one sense, that is, by His own free will, but not less by restraint, by subjecting His own free thought to that law of self-consistent energy, by which a chaos becomes a cosmos. Order is the grand regulating principle of all things. . . . A congregation of the masses of the people, blown up with the idea of liberty, can only produce confusion and anarchy, unless these masses are willing to submit themselves to the constraints of reason and law. . . . The class of men, therefore, who inflame the passions of the masses by vague harangues about liberty, are to be accounted among the greatest enemies of the people, especially of the working man. Personally, there are no doubt great differences among such men. I am willing to think that many of them are honourable and high-principled; self-contained crotchet-mongers, sentimental idealists, fantastic philanthropists, meagre theorists whom all facts have not taught, may form a large proportion; but the selfish, the ambitious, the conceited, the envious, and the proud, certainly contribute their quota; while to some the terrible description of the apostle Jude may be literally applicable: "Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." . . . On the contrary, the happy results of order, under the constraining power of reason, in society, are love, harmony, moderation, and toleration; right and justice in the administration of the laws; stability in social institutions; peace, prosperity, and permanence. Liberty is a wild horse, which can only be made serviceable to the commonwealth by being saddled and bridled by the great master, Order; it is a wine which, unless carefully used under the prescription of a wise physician, lifts a man for a moment into an imaginary heaven, only that it may plunge him into a real hell.

PROGRESS

R. S. Nye

Progress! What pictures the word suggests! Crouching cave-men struggling with the elements of language, hardy adventurers sailing out on unknown seas, patient scientists delving into the secrets of nature. Countless lives dedicated to an ideal called Progress. It is an old and trite saying that there can be no state of equilibrium. Nations and individuals must advance or retreat. There can be no rest. And yet how tell the one from the other? We call ours a progressive age; but are we sure that we are advancing? Perhaps the tremendous material expansion of the last century, the growth of democratic institutions, the acceleration of travel and communication, the popular conception of the doctrine of evolution, have combined to produce in us an optimism and a sense of inevitable progress. Monsieur Coué is a clever man, but his only claim to fame lies in catching a happy phrase to express a universal conviction. "Day by day in every way we are getting better and better." We have nailed that standard to the masthead, deserted the helm and gone below to speed up the engines, happy in the thought that all motion must necessarily be onward, and that the only requisite is speed.

A series of articles have recently been published which strikingly typify the modern attitude toward progress. The first started thus: "See this picture. It shows a man running, panting, carrying a message from Marathon to the civilization of Greece, to die at the end of the run." Beside that runner a picture shows the wireless telegraph equipment that sends messages through the air. The Greek runner might cover twenty miles in an hour and twenty minutes. That would be marvelous speed. The wireless goes around the world seven times in one second and sends one hundred words a minute. That is "progress." But is it? Are you better men than that ancient runner, the example of Greek manhood? He ran—and died. Simple and elemental; but do we produce men who can win a more glorious epitaph? The second article began thus: "Another picture shows us a monk in a cell, slowly and with failing eyesight writing by hand the book that only a few eager scholars can read." Beside this is pictured the quadruple press, and we are told that forest trees are converted into newspapers in two and one-half hours. Has the quadruple press multiplied the genius of our literary men? Poor Shakespeare! He had to write his plays long-hand. What a marvel he would have been if he could have poured them out in contract lots into the waiting ear of a dictaphone.

No, in the last analysis civilization always depends upon the qualities of the people who bear it; all the magnificence of the modern world rests upon living foundations; the only question for modern society to ask itself is, "Are we producing better men and women?" It matters not at all that the modern factory system is a triumph of efficiency, if its only human resultant is an increasing mass of dull, embruted, discontented cogs. It matters not at all that modern man can ride in automobiles, can live in steam heated houses and sleep in electrically warmed beds, or that he can call in predigested foods and patent medicines to replace the normal body functions, if the only lasting monument to their use is an increasing softness and flabbiness and mental looseness, a ready acceptance of the mediocre and easy. Progress is not measured by an increasing number of people and things. And if we will really achieve progress we must divorce ourselves once for all from the notions that increasing knowledge spells increasing intelligence, that morality is measured in codes, and that the only way to find happiness is to go hunt it with a gold brick.

HEROISM IN BUSINESS

From TRAFFIC

John Ruskin

There might, on some theories, be a conceivably good architecture for exchanges—that is to say if there were any heroism in the fact or deed of exchange, which might be typically carved on the outside of your building. For, you know, all beautiful architecture must be adorned with sculpture or painting; and for sculpture or painting you must have a subject. And hitherto it has been a received opinion among the nations of the world that the only right subjects for either were *heroisms* of some sort. Even on his pots and his flagons, the Greek put a Hercules slaying lions, or an Apollo slaying serpents, or Bacchus slaying melancholy giants, and earthborn despondencies. On his temples, the Greek put contests of great warriors in founding states, or of gods with evil spirits. On his houses and temples alike, the Christian put carvings of angels conquering devils; or of hero-martyrs exchanging this world for another; subject inappropriate, I think, to our manner of exchange here. And the Master of Christians not only left his followers without any orders as to the sculpture of affairs of exchange on the outside of buildings, but gave some strong evidence of his dislike of affairs of exchange within them. And yet there might surely be a

heroism in such affairs; and all commerce become a kind of selling doves, not impious. The wonder has always been great to me, that heroism has never been supposed to be in anywise consistent with the practice of supplying people with food, or clothes; but rather with that of quartering oneself upon them for food, and stripping them of their clothes. Spoiling of armour is an heroic deed in all ages; but the selling of clothes, old, or new, has never taken any colour of magnanimity. Yet one does not see why feeding the hungry and clothing the naked should ever become base businesses, even when engaged in on a large scale. If one could contrive to attach the notion of conquest to them anyhow? so that, supposing there were anywhere an obstinate race, who refused to be comforted, one might take some pride in giving them compulsory comfort; and as it were, "occupying a country" with one's gifts, instead of one's army? If one could only consider it as much a victory to get a barren field sown, as to get an eared field stripped; and contend who should build villages instead of who should "carry" them. . . .

The only absolutely and unapproachably heroic element in the soldier's work seems to be—that he is paid little for it—and regularly: while you traffickers, and exchangers, and others occupied in presumably benevolent business, like to be paid much for it—and by chance. I never can make out how it is that a knight-errant does not expect to be paid for his trouble, but a peddler-errant always does;—that people are willing to take hard knocks for nothing, but never to sell ribands cheap;—that they are ready to go on fervent crusades to recover the tomb of a buried God, never on any travels to fulfil the orders of a living God;—that they will go anywhere barefoot to preach their faith, but must be well bribed to practice it, and are perfectly ready to give the Gospel gratis, but never the loaves and fishes.

SELF-EDUCATION

John Cardinal Newman

If I had to choose between a so-called University, which dispensed with residence and tutorial superintendence, and gave its degrees to any person who passed an examination in a wide range of subjects, and a University which had no professors or examinations at all, but merely brought a number of young men together for three or four years, and then sent them away as the University of Oxford is said to have done some sixty years since, if I were asked which of these two

methods was the better discipline of the intellect,—mind, I do not say which is *morally* the better, for it is plain that compulsory study must be a good and idleness an intolerable mischief,—but if I must determine which of the two courses was the more successful in training, molding, enlarging the mind, which sent out men the more fitted for their secular duties, which produced better public men, men of the world, men whose names would descend to posterity, I have no hesitation in giving the preference to that University which did nothing, over that which exacted of its members an acquaintance with every science under the sun.

Self-education in any shape, in the most restricted sense, is preferable to a system of teaching which, professing so much, really does so little for the mind. Shut your College gates against the votary of knowledge, throw him back upon the searchings and the efforts of his own mind; he will gain by being spared an entrance into your Babel. Few indeed there are who can dispense with the stimulus and support of instructors, or will do anything at all, if left to themselves. And fewer still (though such great minds are to be found) who will not, from such unassisted attempts, contract a self-reliance and a self-esteem, which are not only moral evils, but serious hindrances to the attainment of truth. And next to none, perhaps, or none, who will not be reminded from time to time of the disadvantage under which they lie, by their imperfect grounding, by the breaks, deficiencies, and irregularities of their knowledge, by the eccentricity of opinion and the confusion of principle which they exhibit. They will be too often ignorant of what every one knows and takes for granted, of that multitude of small truths which fall upon the mind like dust, impalpable and ever accumulating; they may be unable to converse, they may argue perversely, they may pride themselves on their worst paradoxes or their grossest truisms, they may be full of their own mode of viewing things, unwilling to be put out of their way, slow to enter into the minds of others;—but, with these and whatever other liabilities upon their heads, they are likely to have more thought, more mind, more philosophy, more true enlargement, than those earnest but ill-used persons, who are forced to load their minds with a score of subjects against an examination, who have too much on their hands to indulge themselves in thinking or investigation, who devour premise and conclusion together with indiscriminate greediness, who hold whole sciences on faith, and commit demonstrations to memory, and who too often, as might be expected, when their period of education is passed, throw up all they have learned in disgust, having gained nothing really by their anxious labors, except perhaps the habit of application.

AN AUTHOR AS PLAYMATE

*From TWO VIEWS OF EDUCATION **

Lane Cooper

Select for your private property, as it were, some one standard author; one with whom you mean to keep company for ten years. Love him as the wolf loves the lamb—swallow him whole. Yet, on second thought, do not bolt him. Gradually masticate all that he has written, and the best of what has been written about him. Try to pierce the secret of his life and activity. The proper study of mankind is biography. When you have found his secret, it will probably bear a resemblance to something within yourself, and that, too, no matter how gigantic your hero may look to you at first, or how remote his interests may seem from yours. The interests of all men and all ages are much the same, in kind if not in vigor. Accordingly, when you are casting about for a fish, do not be afraid of landing one that is too big. You may have the swiftest and strongest in the ocean, almost for the asking. The big fellows are always swimming in clear view. There is that leviathan *huge* Homer. You may draw him out with a hook—out of the book-market with an eighty-cent silver hook; and you may play with him as with a bird. Hugest of beasts that swim, he is the most amiable and amusing of household pets. The most fortunate and enviable of householders are those who, having a fair portion of this world's goods and friends, have early in life caught a substantial author for a playmate.

'THE COLDNESS OF GENIUS

From THE PARADOX OF ACTING

Denis Diderot

Great poets, great actors, and, I may add, all great copyists of Nature, in whatever art, beings gifted with fine imagination, with broad judgment, with exquisite tact, with a sure touch of taste, are the least sensitive of all creatures. They are too apt for too many things, too busy with observing, considering, and reproducing, to have their inmost hearts affected with any liveliness. To me such an one always has his portfolio spread before him and his pencil in his fingers.

It is we who feel; it is they who watch, study, and give us the result. And then . . . well, why should I not say it? Sensibility is by no means the distinguishing mark of a great genius. He will have, let us say, an

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abstract love of justice, but he will not be moved to temper it with mercy. It is the head, not the heart, which works in and for him. Let some unforeseen opportunity arise, the man of sensibility will lose it; he will never be a great king, a great minister, a great commander, a great advocate, a great physician. Fill the front of a theatre with tearful creatures, but I will none of them on the boards.

And pray, why should the actor be different from the poet, the painter, the orator, the musician? It is not in the stress of the first burst that characteristic traits come out. It is in moments of stillness and self-command; in moments entirely unexpected. Who can tell whence these traits have their being? They are a sort of inspiration. They come when the man of genius is hovering between nature and his sketch of it, and keeping a watchful eye on both. The beauty of inspiration, the chance hits of which his work is full, and of which the sudden appearance startles himself, have an importance, a success, a sureness very different from that belonging to the first fling. Cool reflection must bring the fury of enthusiasm to its bearings.

The extravagant creature who loses his self-control has no hold on us; this is gained by the man who is self-controlled. The great poets, especially the great dramatic poets, keep a keen watch on what is going on, both in the physical and the moral world.

INTUITION AND EXPRESSION

*From AESTHETICS **

Benedetto Croce

One often hears people say that they have many great thoughts in their minds, but that they are not able to express them. But if they really had them, they would have coined them into just so many beautiful, sounding words, and thus have expressed them. If these thoughts seem to vanish or to become few and meagre in the act of expressing them, the reason is that they did not exist or really were few and meagre. People think that all of us ordinary men imagine and intuit countries, figures and scenes like painters, and bodies like sculptors; save that painters and sculptors know how to paint and carve such images, while we bear them unexpressed in our souls. They believe that anyone could have imagined a Madonna of Raphael; but that Raphael was Raphael owing to his technical ability in putting the Madonna upon canvas. Nothing can be more false than this view. The world which as a rule we intuit is a small thing. It consists of little expressions,

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which gradually become greater and wider with the increasing spiritual concentration of certain moments. They are the words we say to ourselves, our silent judgments "Here is a man, here is a horse, this is heavy, this is sharp, this pleases me," etc. It is a medley of light and color, with no greater pictorial value than would be expressed by a haphazard splash of colours, from among which one could barely make out a few special, distinctive traits. This and nothing else is what we possess in our ordinary life; this is the basis of our ordinary action. . . .

It has been observed by those who have best studied the psychology of artists that when, after having given a rapid glance at any one, they attempt to obtain a real intuition of him, in order, for example, to paint his portrait, then this ordinary vision, that seems so precise, so lively, reveals itself as little better than nothing. What remains is found to be at the most some superficial trait, which would not even suffice for a caricature. The person to be painted stands before the artist like a world to discover. Michelangelo said, "One paints, not with the hands, but with the brain." Leonardo shocked the prior of the Convent of the Graces by standing for days together gazing at the "Last Supper" without touching it with the brush. He remarked of this attitude: "The minds of men of lofty genius are most active in invention when they are doing the least external work." The painter is a painter, because he sees what others only feel or catch a glimpse of, but do not see. We think we see a smile, but in reality we have only a vague impression of it, we do not perceive all the characteristic traits of which it is the sum, as the painter discovers them after he has worked upon them and is thus able to fix them on the canvas. We do not intuitively possess more even of our intimate friend, who is with us every day and at all hours, than at most certain traits of physiognomy which enable us to distinguish him from others.

THE POET'S INSPIRATION

From A DEFENSE OF POETRY

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds. We are aware of evanescent visitations of thought and feeling sometimes associated with place or person, sometimes regarding our own mind alone, and always arising unforeseen and departing unbidden, but elevating and delightful beyond all expression: so that even in the desire and the regret they leave, there cannot but be pleasure, participating as it does in the nature of its object. It is as it were the interpenetration of a diviner nature through our own; but its footsteps

are like those of a wind over the sea, which the coming calm erases, and whose traces remain only, as on the wrinkled sands which pave it. These and corresponding conditions of being are experienced principally by those of the most delicate sensibility and the most enlarged imagination; and the state of mind produced by them is at war with every base desire. The enthusiasm of virtue, love, patriotism, and friendship is essentially linked with such emotions; and whilst they last, self appears as what it is, an atom to a universe. Poets are not only subject to these experiences as spirits of the most refined organization, but they can colour all that they combine with the evanescent hues of this ethereal world; a word, a trait in the representation of a scene or a passion will touch the enchanted chord, and reanimate, in those who have ever experienced these emotions, the sleeping, the cold, the buried image of the past. Poetry thus makes immortal all that is best and most beautiful in the world; it arrests the vanishing apparitions which haunt the interlunations of life, and veiling them, or in language or in form, sends them forth among mankind, bearing sweet news of kindred joy to those with whom their sisters abide—abide, because there is no portal of expression from the caverns of the spirit which they inhabit into the universe of things. Poetry redeems from decay the visitations of the divinity in man.

Poetry turns all things to loveliness; it exalts the beauty of that which is most beautiful, and it adds beauty to that which is most deformed; it marries exultation and horror, grief and pleasure, eternity and change; it subdues to union under its light yoke all irreconcilable things. It transmutes all that it touches, and every form moving within the radiance of its presence is changed by wondrous sympathy to an incarnation of the spirit which it breathes: its secret alchemy turns to potable gold the poisonous waters which flow from death through life; it strips the veil of familiarity from the world, and lays bare the naked and sleeping beauty, which is the spirit of its forms.

HAMLET'S ADVICE TO THE PLAYERS

From HAMLET

William Shakespeare

Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire

and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings; who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumbshows and noise. I would have such a fellow whipp'd for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it . . .

Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature: for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to Nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. But this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must, in your allowance, o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan nor man, have so strutted and bellowed, that I have thought some of Nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably . . .

And let those that play your Clowns speak no more than is set down for them: for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though, in the meantime, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the Fool that uses it.

REVELATION IN THE THEATRE *

Max Reinhardt

The theatre is deathless. It is the happiest loophole of escape for those who have secretly put their childhood in their pockets and have gone off with it to play to the end of their days. The art of the stage affords also liberation from the conventional drama of life, for it is not dissimulation that is the business of the play but revelation. Only the actor who cannot lie, who is himself undisguised, and who profoundly unlocks his heart deserves the laurel. The supreme goal of the theatre is truth, not the outward, naturalistic truth of every day, but the ultimate truth of the soul.

* From *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol. 22, p. 39, by permission of the publishers.

We can telegraph and telephone and wire pictures across the ocean; we can fly over it. But the way to the human being next us is still as far as to the stars. The actor takes us on this way. With the light of the poet he climbs the unexplored peaks of the human soul, his own soul, in order to transform it secretly there and to return with his hands, eyes, and voice full of wonders.

He is at once sculptor and sculpture; he is man at the farthest borderline between reality and dream, and he stands with both feet in both realms. The actor's power of self suggestion is so great that he can bring about in his body not only inner and psychological but even outer and physical changes. And when one ponders on the miracle of Konnersreuth, whereby a simple peasant girl experiences every Friday the Passion of Christ, with so strong an imaginative power that her hands and feet show wounds and she actually weeps tears of blood, one may judge to what wonders and to what mysterious world the art of acting may lead; for it is assuredly by the same process that the player, in Shakespeare's words, changes utterly his accustomed visage, his aspect and carriage, his whole being, and can weep for Hecuba and make others weep. Every night the actor bears the stigmata, which his imagination inflicts upon him, and bleeds from a thousand wounds.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON AT COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL *

Bernard DeVoto

It is Friday afternoon in the Little Red Schoolhouse. Twilight fills the room, with shadows on the snow turning from blue to purple. The rafters resound with the voices of young declaimers.

"Opulence trembles in all his palaces, the past rises before us as in a dream, like a plumed knight James G. Blaine marches down the halls of the American Congress and throws his shining lance full and fair against the brazen foreheads of the defamers of his country and the maligners of his honor. . . . The aged minister unrolls that faded flag; it is a blue banner gleaming with thirteen stars. He unrolls that parchment; it is a colonel's commission in the Continental army addressed to BENEDICT ARNOLD! And there, in that rude hut, while the deathwatch throbbed like a heart in the shattered wall: there, unknown, unwept, in all the bitterness of desolation, lay the corse of the patriot and the traitor—and that arm, yonder, beneath the snow-white mountains, in the deep silence of the river of the dead, first raised into light the Banner of the Stars. . . . And I said I would rather have been a French

* From the Easy Chair in *Harper's Magazine*, by permission of the editors.

peasant and worn wooden shoes. I would rather have been that poor peasant with my loving wife by my side, knitting as the day died out of the sky—with my children upon my knees and their arms about me—I would rather have been that man and gone down to the tongueless silence of the dreamless dust, than to have been that imperial impersonation of force and murder known as Napoleon the Great. . . . But what do we see? We see a world at peace, adorned with every form of art, with music's myriad voices thrilled, while lips are rich with words of love and truth; a world in which no exile sighs, no prisoner mourns; a world on which the gibbet's shadow does not fall; a world where labor reaps its full reward; and over all, in the great dome, shines the eternal star of human hope."

Well, what? Well, this isn't an acid or a base. It is literature. You think it sounds silly? Brethren, we had better not be fastidious about silliness if we are going to deal with literature. The tears flow easily? No more easily than now.

Friday afternoon at Country Day School was just a difference in phase, not in substance. From history's watchtower the phases look astonishingly alike, except that the boys and girls in 1870 may have had a little better education in literature. At any rate, they took in literature by way of the ear as well as the eye. Reading was something more than skill at flash-cards, and poetry had to exist in a dimension it has since forfeited. And if we have to decide whether this is an acid or a base—well, you and I are doubtless superior persons. We have a very low toleration of popular literature, now and forever. We would rather perish than enjoy sentimentality. Righteousness is our garment and we never sneak a look at the confession magazines.

THE POSE OF THE CYNIC

*From EUROPEAN AND AFRICAN ADDRESSES **

Theodore Roosevelt

Let the man of learning, the man of lettered leisure, beware of that queer and cheap temptation to pose to himself and to others as the cynic, as the man who has outgrown emotions and beliefs, the man to whom good and evil are as one. The poorest way to face life is to face it with a sneer. There are many men who feel a kind of twisted pride in cynicism; there are many who confine themselves to criticism of the way others do what they themselves dare not even attempt. There is no more unhealthy being, no man less worthy of respect, than he who

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either really holds, or feigns to hold, an attitude of sneering disbelief towards all that is great and lofty, whether in achievement or in that noble effort which, even if it fails, comes second to achievement. A cynical habit of thought and speech, a readiness to criticise work which the critic himself never tries to perform, an intellectual aloofness which will not accept contact with life's realities—all these are marks, not, as the possessor would fain think, of superiority, but of weakness. They mark the men unfit to bear their part manfully in the stern strife of living, who seek, in the affectation of contempt for the achievements of others, to hide from others and from themselves their own weakness. The role is easy; there is none easier, save only the role of the man who sneers alike at both criticism and performance.

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, and comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat. Shame on the man of cultivated taste who permits refinement to develop into a fastidiousness that unfits him for doing the rough work of a workaday world. Among the free peoples who govern themselves there is but a small field of usefulness open for the men of cloistered life who shrink from contact with their fellows. Still less room is there for those who deride or slight what is done by those who actually bear the brunt of the day; nor yet for those others who always profess that they would like to take action, if only the conditions of life were not what they actually are. The man who does nothing cuts the same sordid figure in the pages of history, whether he be cynic, or fop, or voluptuary. There is little use for the being whose tepid soul knows nothing of the great and generous emotion, of the high pride, the stern belief, the lofty enthusiasm, of the men who quell the storm and ride the thunder. Well for these men if they succeed; well also, though not so well, if they fail, given only that they have nobly ventured, and have put forth all their heart and strength. It is war-worn Hotspur, spent with hard fighting, he of the many errors and the valiant end, over whose memory we love to linger, not over the memory of the young lord who "but for the vile guns would have been a soldier."

POETS AND INDIVIDUALISM

*From THE PROMISE OF AMERICAN POLITICS ***T. V. Smith*

To mention the poets as holding the key to our problem of individualism may well beget a smile from hard-headed men. But heads hardened beyond a point become blocks. Disdain of the poets reveals a mind with only the empty pride of practicality but without the means to be really practical in things social. It is not practical to defeat one's ends by the means one uses to achieve them. An individualism which actually develops only a few individuals and salves other individuals with the mere anarchistic hope that they are well off since you are—this is a seepage theory of welfare which has every element of wishful thinking. Such utopianism does not become practical men.

The foundation of straight thinking in things social is right feeling. There must be at bottom a deep sympathy for all men before we will pass the chance at individuality around to all of them. The poets are the original sympathizers. A great teacher, who was at once a preacher and a poet, has declared that, unless we become like little children, we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven—or, we may add in the same spirit, into a democracy on earth. Now the child it is who reaches out in loving absorption to embrace everybody and everything that cross the heaven of his threshold. The poet, carrier par excellence of this child spirit, reaches out through an act of elemental sympathy, by what sophistication calls the "pathetic fallacy," to identify himself, as it were, with all things, inanimate objects as well as living beings. In rapt mood of deep friendliness his own heartbeats become in the shell the distant roar of ocean, or his own emotions make warm and pulsate the rock, rivulet, and mountain. The poets are, by and large, so robust in this sympathy that their fullest consciousness of individuality seems to be found in this intimate self-rewarding gesture of identification with all things else. There is a mantle of imagination found or spread over every common thing, which we need only remove and treasure as our dearest value in order to substitute for exclusive ownership a shared significance which is the gold standard of democratic individualism.

Emerson heard the voices of nature so lustily singing that, Yankee though he was, he built his individuality upon the shared rather than upon the exclusively owned. Moreover he teaches us what every democratic man has learned in becoming what he is, that "in the mud and scum of things, there always, always something sings."

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THE POET'S EMOTION

*From TRADITION AND THE INDIVIDUAL TALENT ***T. S. Eliot*

It is not in his personal emotions, the emotions provoked by particular events in his life, that the poet is in any way remarkable or interesting. His particular emotions may be very simple, or crude, or flat. The emotion in his poetry will be a very complex thing, but not with the complexity of the emotions of people who have very complex or unusual emotions in life. One error, in fact, of eccentricity in poetry is to seek for new human emotions to express; and in this search for novelty in the wrong place it discovers the perverse. The business of the poet is not to find new emotions, but to use the ordinary ones and, in working them into poetry, to express feelings which are not in actual emotions at all. And emotions which he has never experienced will serve his turn as well as those familiar to him. Consequently, we must believe that "emotion recollected in tranquillity" is an inexact formula. For it is neither emotion, nor recollection, nor, without distortion of meaning, tranquillity. It is a concentration, and a new thing resulting from concentration, of a very great number of experiences which to the practical and active person would not seem to be experiences at all; it is a concentration which does not happen consciously or of deliberation. These experiences are not "recollected," and they finally unite in an atmosphere which is "tranquil" only in that it is a passive attending upon the event. Of course this is not quite the whole story. There is a great deal, in the writing of poetry, which must be conscious and deliberate. In fact, the bad poet is usually unconscious where he ought to be conscious, and conscious where he ought to be unconscious. Both errors tend to make him "personal." Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality. But, of course, only those who have personality and emotions know what it means to want to escape from these things.

THE MAN OF IMAGINATION

*From DREAMTHORP**Alexander Smith*

The life of the imaginative man is never a commonplace one: his lights are brighter, his glooms are darker, than the lights and glooms of

* *From Selected Essays 1917-1932*, copyright, 1932, by Harcourt, Brace & Co., Inc.

the vulgar. His ecstasies are as restless as his pains. The great writer has this perilous faculty in excess; and through it he will, as a matter of course, draw out of the atmosphere of circumstance surrounding him the keenness of pleasure and pain. To my own notion, the best gifts of the gods are neither the most glittering nor the most admired. These gifts I take to be, a moderate ambition, a taste for repose with circumstances favourable thereto, a certain mildness of passion, an even-beating pulse, an even-beating heart. I do not consider heroes and celebrated persons the happiest of mankind. I do not envy Alexander the shouting of his armies, nor Dante his laurel wreath. Even were I able, I would not purchase these at the prices the poet and the warrior paid. So far, then, as great writers—great poets, especially—are of imagination all compact—a peculiarity of mental constitution which makes a man go shares with every one he is brought into contact with; which makes him enter into Romeo's rapture when he touches Juliet's cheek among cypresses silvered by the Verona moonlight, and the stupor of the blinded and pinioned wretch on the scaffold before the bolt is drawn—so far as this special gift goes, I do not think the great poet,—and by virtue of it he is a poet,—is likely to be happier than your most ordinary mortal. On the whole, perhaps, it is the great readers rather than the great writers who are entirely to be envied. They pluck the fruits, and are spared the trouble of rearing them. Prometheus filched fire from heaven, and had for reward the crag of Caucasus, the chain, the vulture; while they for whom he stole it cook their suppers upon it, stretch out benumbed hands towards it, and see its light reflected in their children's faces. They are comfortable: he, roofed by the keen crystals of the stars, groans above.

TWO WORLDS HARMONIZED

From EDUCATING LIBERALLY *

Hoyt H. Hudson

The work of art is itself a material object, and yet the materials of it seem to be transformed by the nonmaterial powers that are instinct in it. It is a whole which is made up of what are usually accounted to be refractory and contradictory elements. A symphony of Beethoven's, performed by an orchestra, calls for what might be viewed as the strangest conglomeration of physical media which accident or madness

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could throw together. Here are men, with perhaps a woman or two, who have come from various countries and environments; they have learned their various skills, each in his own way in some degree of isolation; their instruments, fantastic in shapes, are made of pieces of brass, carved wood, silver, horse-hair, leather, reed, sheep-gut, steel, and so on, brought from a hundred different locations on our terrestrial globe. The physical means of producing sound are the muscles and bones of the performers' limbs, fingers, and chests, along with their breath itself. Then there are the musical scores, differing for the various players or sections. There is the director, whose instrument is his own presence and body. The music itself was first conceived and written down, fragment by fragment, more than a century ago, and various means of preservation and transmission have joined to bring it to this group of performers. Yet all things, material and nonmaterial, issue into one harmonious whole; the very audience itself may be caught up into this whole, to live for a time in the world shaped and created from what could so easily be chaos—is, in fact, a chaos except as it is brought together by imaginative thought. Is it a physical world, or a spiritual one? It is both, because it is, within its limits, complete. The glue that holds the violins together contributes to it. So do the experiences, the sufferings, the aspirations, the visions, the loves, of Beethoven, of the conductor, of each member of the audience who shares in this world.

CAESAR'S ORIGINALITY

*From notes to CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA **

George Bernard Shaw

Originality gives a man an air of frankness, generosity, and magnanimity by enabling him to estimate the value of truth, money, or success in any particular instance quite independently of convention and moral generalization. He therefore will not . . . tell a lie which everybody knows to be a lie (and consequently expects him as a matter of good taste to tell). His lies are not found out: they pass for candors. . . . He knows that the real moment of success is not the moment apparent to the crowd. Hence, in order to produce an impression of complete disinterestedness and magnanimity, he has only to act with entire selfishness; and this is perhaps the only sense in which a man can be said to be *naturally* great. It is in this sense that I have represented Caesar as great. Having virtue, he had no need of goodness. He is neither forgiving, frank, nor generous, because a man who is too great

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to resent has nothing to forgive; a man who says things that other people are afraid to say need be no more frank than Bismarck was; and there is no generosity in giving things you do not want to people of whom you intend to make use. This distinction between virtue and goodness is not understood in England: hence the poverty of our drama in heroes. Our stage attempts at them are mere goody-goodies. Goodness, in its popular British sense of self-denial, implies that man is vicious by nature, and that supreme goodness is supreme martyrdom. Not sharing that pious opinion, I have not given countenance to it in any of my plays. In this I follow the precedent of the ancient myths, which represent the hero as vanquishing his enemies, not in fair fight, but with enchanted sword, superequine horse and magical invulnerability, the possession of which, from the vulgar moralistic point of view, robs his exploits of any merit whatever.

Chapter 5

VOICE

HITHERTO little has been said about the mechanics of voice, and for a reason. It should be apparent that in our attempt to secure logical expression we need not be much concerned about good voice. Correct emphasis, inflection, and attitude are not dependent upon vocal beauty or strength; logical meaning can be adequately conveyed so long as pronunciation is reasonably distinct. It is important that expression be distinguished from pronunciation, and both from basic voice quality. One may have excellent voice quality, yet fail to pronounce his words distinctly and read with a colorless monotony of expression. Or he may have very poor voice quality, yet pronounce with meticulous care and read with commendable expression. And I repeat, for the expression of logical meaning good voice and pronunciation are not strictly necessary.

Voice, pronunciation, and expression. But the reading of poetry is another matter. From the practical art of reproducing logical meaning we shall soon proceed to the fine art of interpretation of poetry. We shall have the same concern with meaning as in earlier chapters, but in addition we must undertake the representation of strong feeling and imagination and the reproduction of beautiful sound combinations. If the poet's full meaning is to be properly interpreted, the reader must have a good voice. Only an instrument with a beautiful tone can adequately render beautiful music. It becomes our present task to define good voice, and to discover, if we can, how such a voice may be developed.

What is a good voice? The definition of good voice seems very simple until one attempts it. We all know, or think we know, what qualities we like in a voice, but in our descriptions of them we can seldom get beyond such terms as "pleasant," "agreeable," "beautiful," and the like. Sometimes we get as far as "clear," "distinct," "flexible," "rich," and "soft." Almost invariably we confuse basic *quality* with expressive *use* of voice, or with pronunciation. We say we like an Englishman's voice because it is "soft" or "broad," or we dislike it because it is "affected," when the real cause of our prejudice may be a dropping of final *r*'s, or an unfamiliar inflection pattern.

Fundamental tone quality is distinguishable from other aspects of voice when one pronounces a vowel alone (as *ah* or *oh*) and intones it on a constant pitch. Let us isolate this phase of voice and try to discover when it is "good" and when it is "bad." It should be apparent at once that this intoned *ah* will be "good" when it is evenly sustained, when it is steady and free from wavering. Such firmness of voice is needed in the interpretation of poetry and drama when there is sustained and deep emotion, and when there is need for speaking with some force. To acquire such a quality we must understand the process of breathing.

Breathing. Breathing, like most other bodily functions, is muscular, and like other muscular functions, it is liable to abuse. Breathing will be best for health and best for voice when it is as nearly as possible what nature intended it to be. To discover the natural method of breathing you may well examine a young child, unspoiled by the ways of civilization. Most adults have spent so much time sitting in chairs, and humped over desks, that they have lost the normal physical habits of youth. Investigation of the breathing habits of a normal child or a normal athlete will reveal that in inhalation and exhalation there is seldom any pronounced rise and fall of the chest. Instead there is an expansion and contraction of the body just above the belt line; that is, breathing is accomplished by interaction of the diaphragmatic and abdominal muscles, rather than by the muscles which lift the ribs and shoulders.

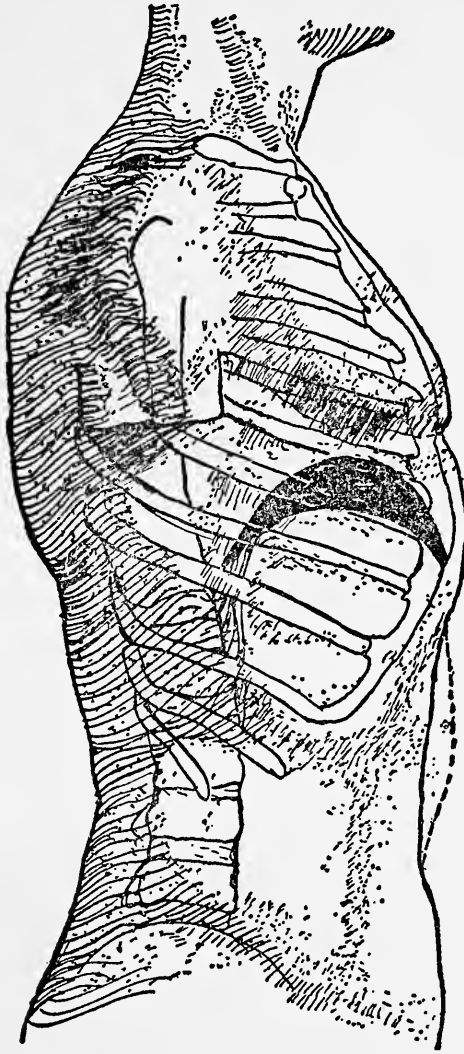
Inhalation. Let us understand first that the expansion at the waistline is not caused by the rush of air into the lungs. The rush of air (inhalation) is caused by muscular action at the waistline.

It occurs because certain muscles enlarge the chest cavity containing the lungs, and the laws of atmospheric pressure demand that the air rush in (through the nostrils or open mouth) and occupy this newly made space. To understand how this enlargement of the chest is accomplished, we must know something of the nature of muscles. They are said to "contract" and "expand," but we will do better to avoid the term "expand" and think of them as *contracting*, that is, becoming shorter and thicker, and *relaxing*, that is, allowing themselves to be drawn out again to their original form. Muscles perform work only when they contract. In general, muscles do not push. Now let us examine the very important muscle known as the diaphragm. It is a membranous partition, shaped like an inverted bowl, which separates the chest from the abdomen. The bony framework of the chest forms a firm anchorage which does not yield when the diaphragm contracts. That is, its contraction does not pull the breastbone closer to the backbone. Indeed, a slight lifting of the ribs will generally cause some expansion of the lower chest when it might be supposed that the contraction of the diaphragm would draw it in. But since, in contracting, the diaphragm must become shorter, and since its points of attachment cannot be drawn closer together, it merely reduces its arch to something approaching a flat plane. The effect, of course, is to create additional space at the bottom of the lungs (which rest upon the diaphragm), and atmospheric pressure causes this space to fill with air. This process is inhalation.

Exhalation. All speech is uttered with exhaled, not with inhaled, breath, so that it is with this phase of breathing that we are particularly concerned. Once the diaphragm has contracted and taken a lower position across the body, how is it to get back to its original position? It cannot resume its higher arch of its own effort, for its points of attachment are lower than its middle, and muscles have power only to pull. It must be pushed back by some force other than itself.

When the diaphragm contracts, it must, of course, displace some of the organs below it in the abdomen. It crowds down upon these organs—the liver, spleen, intestines, and other viscera—and, since they are only slightly compressible, causes them to bulge outward in front and at the sides. This is the expansion of the waistline

mentioned above. This expansion and contraction of the front wall of the body just below the ribs and above the waistline is the outward indication of natural breathing. The natural resilience of these organs, together with the contraction of the abdominal mus-



DIAPHRAGMATIC-ABDOMINAL BREATHING

The dark arch across the body represents roughly the space through which the diaphragm moves in breathing.

cles (which run in thin layers across the front of the body), causes an upward pressure against the diaphragm, pushing it back to its original high arched position and forcing part of the air out of the lungs. This is exhalation.

The process seems simple enough, but experience shows that many students fail to understand it. Let us summarize the whole process of breathing. In inhalation, the diaphragm contracts and takes a lower position across the body. In doing so it gives the lungs more room above and displaces the visceral organs below, causing them to bulge outward at the waistline. In exhalation, the abdominal muscles crowd the viscera inward, causing them to bulge upward against the diaphragm, forcing it back to its high arched position, and so expelling air from the lungs.

The importance of diaphragmatic breathing. There can be little doubt that this is the natural method of breathing, and that it is desirable both for general health and for voice improvement. It is the type of breathing found in any healthy infant and in most normal active adults. It is employed by the mammalian animals which are most like man in organic structure, and nearly always by man himself when he keeps his body parallel to the ground, as in lying down or standing on all fours. It is frequently replaced by chest breathing in those who are sickly or inactive, in badly taught athletes, and sometimes in persons of short stature who try to compensate for their shortness by an exaggerated elevation of the chest.

Chest breathing has been encouraged by the military and gymnastic schools, probably because lung capacity may be measured by chest expansion, and it is generally supposed that a prominent chest is an index of endurance. But so many long distance running and swimming contests are won by athletes who are actually flat chested that it is becoming increasingly apparent that the index of endurance is not a high chest but a deep chest, and that any violent exertion requires *deep* breathing. Certainly this is true of vigorous speaking or singing. It should be apparent also that the constant massage of the visceral organs between the diaphragm and the abdominal muscles is of incalculable value to health because of its aid in eliminating waste materials from the body. The practice of abdominal breathing may go far to account for the astonishing vitality of actors and opera singers, who are able to give exhausting public performances at an age when most persons have retired permanently to the ease of slippers and an armchair.

The value of diaphragmatic breathing to good voice is difficult to prove by scientific reasoning based upon known laws of physics

or biology. We may say that a tone, like a bullet, will travel farther and straighter if projected through a long muzzle, and that "starting a tone at the diaphragm" seems to give it this greater projection. Or we may say that firm abdominal "support" of a tone gives it greater volume and firmer texture. Whatever the explanation, there can be no doubt that this abdominal support does improve vocal quality, particularly if the diaphragm resists the upward thrust from the abdominal muscles, so that the whole base under the lungs is hardened. A knowledge of this fact has led many teachers, ignorant of physiology, to say that there should be a forward thrust of the abdominal wall during vocalization. The abdomen should be *hardened* at this time but it should not expand. Its expansion takes place during *inhalation*, not during *exhalation*. Expansion of this region during vocalization means that the chest wall above must contract with such force as to bulge out the abdomen below while driving out the tone above, and renders very difficult, if not impossible, any effective control of tone. The major secret of good voice in both speaking and singing is careful control of the gradually relaxing diaphragm during vocalization. This muscle is so central in bodily functioning that it is hardly too much to say that diaphragmatic control means emotional control—self-control. One school of speech correction depends solely upon diaphragmatic control for the cure of stuttering. Diaphragmatic breathing is valuable also in increasing lung capacity, thus preparing the reader to carry through in one breath-group the long phrases frequently found in poetry. To a serious student of voice no labor can be too great that is expended in acquiring or improving this form of breath control.

Exercises for Breath Control

1. The first task for the student who wishes seriously to improve his voice is to examine carefully his own breathing. Lie flat on your back on the floor. Place one hand on your chest, and the other on "the diaphragm," that is, on the triangle between the lower ribs and the belt-line. Breathe "naturally," that is, pay no attention to your breathing, but observe your hands. Which one rises when a breath is taken? Is the rise and fall regular? Are breaths long and deep or short and shallow? In good breathing there should be a slow steady expansion and con-

traction of the abdomen under the lower hand, and very little, if any, motion under the upper hand.

2. Try to regularize your breathing by counting to three or four on each inhalation, and to the same number on each exhalation. Keep the flow of breath steady and even. Don't inhale suddenly on the first count and rest on the next two.

3. You will probably find that when you are lying on your back your breathing is diaphragmatic. Now try Exercise 1 while standing easily erect. Is your muscular behavior the same as when lying on your back? Is breathing still evident at the centre of the body or has it shifted to the chest? The following exercise is for those who have difficulty in breathing with the diaphragm while standing.

4. If standing erect seems to destroy diaphragmatic action, you must try to re-establish it. The following directions and devices may help you.

- a. Try to retain when on your feet the sensation or feel of deep breathing.
- b. To discourage the chest from moving stretch both arms high above the head. Breathe as in Exercise 2. Your teacher or fellow student will report whether chest or abdomen is doing the work.
- c. With arms in the same position exhale quickly and vigorously, as if blowing out a candle.
- d. Try panting like a dog. Try it in various positions—while lying flat, on all fours, standing erect, and with arms extended above the head. Keep at it until you can notice a definite to and fro motion in the “diaphragmatic triangle.” Keep the chest still.
- e. Try *b*, *c*, and *d* while supporting your weight on your hands and toes, keeping the body in a straight line. The hands should rest on the floor, or if that is too difficult, on a chair or low table. There must be no bending at the hips. This position, besides making chest breathing difficult, requires a firm flexing of the abdominal muscles, and so almost assures the firm “support” so valuable to good voice. If you can hold this position, and speak or read with a relaxed throat, you will find that the voice takes on a noticeable depth, strength, and firmness. This is a strenuous exercise and should not be carried to the point of fatigue.
- f. If all these attempts to start diaphragmatic action fail, resort must be had to a more deliberate method. Start with what

seems to be the normal position of the abdominal wall. Nearly everyone will find it possible by conscious effort to contract this wall, or "draw in the stomach." First fix clearly in mind the fact that such a contraction is to be accompanied by an exhalation of breath. Then slowly and deliberately try to perform the two operations together. This being accomplished, try reversing the process. That is, inhale as you allow the front wall of the body to go back to its original position. This is a laborious and mechanical method of establishing the desired muscular coordinations of good breathing, but it is nearly always effective. Once the correct action is established, it must be practiced until it becomes easy and habitual.

5. To increase the capacity of the lungs and to strengthen the breathing muscles, try regularizing your breathing as you walk along the street by counting three steps to each inhalation, and the same number on each exhalation. If you find that you do this easily, increase the number of counts to four, five, six, or more. One hand carried across the front of the body will, without attracting undue attention, help you to discover whether the diaphragm is behaving properly.

6. Take a full deep breath at the centre of the body and exhale slowly, making the sound expressed by the letter *f*. The steadiness of the sound will indicate whether the diaphragm is relaxing steadily.

7. Take a deep breath and exhale with the sound of *ah* maintained on a constant pitch. Keep the throat relaxed, and try to hold the tone steady by control of the relaxing diaphragm.

8. Intone a series of five brief *ah*'s, taking a short breath before each. Keep one hand on the "diaphragmatic triangle" to test whether these breaths are really taken with the diaphragm. Do not pinch off the tone with the vocal cords, but keep the throat relaxed, using the breathing muscles to start and stop the tone.

9. Intone in triplets *ha, ha, ha—ha, ha, ha—ha, ha, ha*, etc., taking a short breath before each triplet. You should be able to feel a short abdominal stroke on each syllable. The *h* before the vowel will serve to relax the vocal cords so that the tone cannot be pinched out. Keep the throat relaxed. The nearer you come to a laugh the better.

The importance of recovering the natural or diaphragmatic habit of breathing cannot be overemphasized. It is the foundation of all vocal development, whether in speaking or singing. Without it a good voice is hardly possible, and the demands of worth-while liter-

any interpretation cannot be adequately met. The student must bear in mind that every change or development in muscular habits is necessarily slow and laborious. No one expects to play the piano or violin without practice. Whenever a new pattern of muscular coordinations is involved, long patient practice is necessary. The exercises above, and those which follow, must be practiced faithfully and regularly. The serious student of music is willing to devote many hours each day to practice. The student of reading has a less arduous task, but he need expect no results if less than a half hour per day is devoted to vocal improvement. When one considers the importance of the voice in one's total personality, its value in business and social relationships, and its possibilities as a means of artistic self-expression, surely this modest portion of each day during a school session is a small price to pay for all its advantages.

So much, then, for the first characteristic of a good voice. It should have the firmness, steadiness, and support which come from good breathing.

Vocal relaxation. A second characteristic of good voice is freedom from strain and tension. A voice which is tight, or pinched, or hoarse, or rasping, or throaty is neither comfortable to the speaker nor pleasant to his hearers. Neither is it capable of expressing freely or fully any very deep or sustained emotion. The voice we admire, and the voice that is efficient in speaking or singing, is the voice that functions easily. It must come from a relaxed throat. Strain and tension may sometimes be seen as well as heard. We have all seen a singer's face grow red and the cords stand out in his throat because of the wasteful and unnecessary labor of muscles that normally have nothing to do with the business of singing. And we have all heard the beautiful golden tones that floated from the relaxed throat of a singer to whom vocalization seemed as natural and as comfortable as breathing. We must learn to use correctly those muscles necessary to voice production, and to let alone those muscles which should not be concerned in the process. In order to speak or sing well we should know something of the mechanism of voice production.

Voice production. All vocal tone is produced in that little cartilaginous box resting on top of the windpipe known as the larynx, or "Adam's apple." Within this box are two thin lips which can be

closed or opened by an ingenious muscle system too intricate to be described here. Instead of opening widest in the middle, as do the facial lips, these vocal lips open only at one end; that is, they open in shape of a V. In all other respects their functioning is analogous to that of the facial lips in blowing a brass horn, and it is not analogous to that of any other musical instrument. The human voice is not a reed instrument, like the clarinet or the saxophone; nor are the vocal "cords" mere strings played upon by the friction of a bow, as is a violin string, or agitated by the air, as are the strings of a lute. When the vocal lips are to make sound they are brought together so that, except for the narrow slit between them, they completely close the passage from the lungs up into the head. Then when pressure is exerted by the breathing muscles, the air is forced through this narrow slit causing the edges of the lips to vibrate. This vibration of the lips sets the air in vibration, which vibration is voice, for all sound is air waves.

In this manner *all* voice is produced, whether it be a deep, low growl, or a high, thin, nasal shriek. The difference between a growl and a shriek is due chiefly to causes outside the larynx. It was pointed out in an earlier chapter that tones may vary in time, force, quality, and pitch. Of these variations only one is caused chiefly by action of the vocal lips. The *duration* of a sound may be controlled either by the breathing muscles or by the vocal lips. Changes in *force* and in *quality* are not greatly affected by action of the vocal lips, if at all. But changes in pitch are due chiefly, if not entirely, to changes in the tension of the vocal lips, the pitch of the voice depending, as does the pitch of a violin string, upon the relation of the tension to the thickness and length of the part that vibrates. Pitch is lowered by making the vocal lips thicker, slacker, or longer. It is raised by making them thinner, tighter, or shorter. While all voices are capable of considerable variety in pitch, yet each person has his own normal range, which is relatively fixed by the length and thickness of his vocal lips, and cannot be materially changed by practice. Basses cannot be made into tenors, nor sopranos into altos. One must be content to use as effectively as possible the voice which nature has given him.

Throat relaxation. With this general background of information about the vocal mechanism, let us note next that the labor of

adjusting the vocal lips for voice production should be performed entirely by the little muscles *within* the larynx. If they are interfered with by the pull and strain of outside muscles, the voice is sure to suffer. For good speaking and singing the throat should be relaxed. It should feel comfortable, and voice production should seem to a listener to be effortless and free. If the cords of the neck stand out, if the face becomes flushed or the brow puckered, if the jaw is tight and the tongue rigid, voice quality is sure to be affected. It is regrettable that so many voices are afflicted by these distortions. Our first tendency when the voice is tired, when we must speak very loudly, or when we are under emotional strain, is to do just the wrong thing. We tend to tighten the muscles of the throat when the most helpful thing would be to relax them. Thus we aggravate the condition we wish to remove. These causes, combined in some climates with the irritating effects of fog and smoke-laden air, have rendered many voices chronically hoarse, tight, and unpleasant.

A *good* voice is one that seems to flow through the throat as if there were nothing there to interrupt it.

Exercises for Throat Relaxation

1. In speaking or singing try to throw all the labor upon the breathing muscles and think of the throat as an open tube through which the tone flows. Do not allow any feeling of strain in the back of the mouth or in the throat. Relax the muscles that hold the head erect, and let it fall forward on the chest. Then roll it about slowly on the shoulders, trying to keep the neck muscles completely relaxed.

2. Let the jaw drop. Relax the muscles completely and let it really *drop*. Then let the head fall forward after it. Then with neck, jaw, and tongue completely relaxed shake the head rather briskly from side to side until you can feel the jaw flop back and forth, and the tongue waggle from side to side in the jaws.

3. Simulate a yawn, or if possible, actually yawn. Try to retain the feeling of throat relaxation which follows.

These few exercises are invaluable, and should be practiced diligently. Teachers, ministers, and others who are subject to great vocal strain can almost practice them during the process of speaking. A great deal can be accomplished by merely *thinking* the throat into

relaxation. A good voice is, so far as the throat is concerned, a lazy voice. The American voice is reputed to be hard, strained, high pitched, and unlovely. If it is to improve its reputation and sound agreeable to foreign ears, and if it is ever to express the beauty and feeling that lie in fine literature, it must acquire the ease and economy of production which characterize the voices of great singers.

Glottal attack. Besides allowing the vocal cords to function without interference from extraneous muscles, the speaker or reader should avoid the unpleasant practice of making a separate sharp glottal attack upon every word that begins with a vowel. What seems to happen is this: the speaker will stop the flow of breath before such a word by pinching the vocal lips together, then attack the word by a sharp explosion of breath through this closed glottis. Such a practice destroys fluency of speech, is unpleasant to hear, breaks the continuity and spoils the beauty of poetic phrases, induces hoarseness by irritating the delicate lining of the vocal lips, and it causes a sympathetic tightening of all the muscles of the throat, jaw, and tongue.

A good "attack" requires a careful coordination of breathing with glottal closure. (Remember that we are speaking only of initial vowels.) If the breath flow comes before the glottis is closed, the voice will sound breathy. If the glottis is closed first, and the breath has to explode its way through, the result is the unpleasant and damaging click called the glottal attack. The breath should be turned on just as the vocal lips are set to receive it.

You may be afflicted with this unpleasant habit without being conscious of it. Test yourself by reading the following line:

We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon.

You should speak the first phrase with a continuous flow of breath, eliding the final *n* in *given* with the first vowel in *our*, and the final *s* in *hearts* with the *a* in *away*. In the second phrase, *a sordid boon*, the sense demands, of course, that *a* be separated from the word before it, but it should be spoken without the tight unpleasant click which signifies the glottal attack. Test yourself further by marking all the initial vowels in several lines of verse, and noting whether in reading you break the continuity of the breath flow before these vowels. Take special note of such inconspicuous words as *in*, *on*, *a*. If you have this habit you must take pains to break it.

Exercises for Eliminating Glottal Attack

1. No voice improvement is possible unless the ear is educated to note fine gradations in pronunciation. Listen carefully to your pronunciation of the following paired expressions. There should be no break between the words in the second column; that is *an* and *owl* should not be separated from each other any more than *an-* and *-al-* in *analogy*. If you find yourself making a separate glottal attack of the initial vowels, labor to correct it.

analogy	an owl
theology	the olive
another	an oven
iota	I owe it
tuition	to each one
triangle	try another
creation	three aces
sawing	saw into
Theodore	see a door
any	an eye

2. Intone the vowel sounds, striving for ease of attack. To relax the vocal lips, take a slight breath before each vowel. If this does not secure the desired result, try putting the sound of *h* before each vowel (*ha, he, hi, ho, hu*), resisting the resultant tendency to breathiness.

3. Good habits can sometimes be encouraged by setting a rhythmic pattern for articulation exercises. Try the following chant, with a slight intake of breath before each syllable. Keep one hand at the waistline to test your breathing.

há—há, ha, há—há, ha, há—há—há
 ho—ho, ho, ho—ho, ho, ho—ho—ho

Then try dropping the *h* and chanting the vowels alone, avoiding a glottal attack.

4. Read the following lines, uttering each phrase with one continuous uninterrupted flow of breath, and watching carefully the attack of the initial vowels. Be sure to inhale before each phrase.

It little profits that an idle king . . .
 Matched with an aged wife, I mete and dole
 Unequal laws unto a savage race
 That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee.

Of these unfilial fears I am ashamed.

Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow.

For as you were when first your eye I eyed
Such seems your beauty now.

I all alone bewEEP my outcast state.

Vocal resonance. Besides firm support and relaxation a good voice should have clear pleasing resonance.

We sometimes describe a voice as hard, or rich, or nasal, or mellow. These qualities are due primarily not to breathing or to throat condition, but to resonance. Teachers of singing refer to the improvement of resonance as "voice placing." They will say that a student should direct his tone toward the upper front teeth, or toward the bridge of the nose, or out the top of the head. These are figures of speech. Changes in tone quality are changes in resonance, caused by movements of the tongue, jaw, lips, and palate. The physics of resonance is too intricate for review here. All we need to know is that the sound of any musical instrument, including the human voice, is dependent not so much upon its method of production as upon its resonation.¹ The finest violin string in the world, played upon by the greatest master of that instrument, would yield a very poor tone indeed if merely stretched between two pieces of rough board. A violin is a resonator; that is, a box which catches the vibrations from the string and amplifies and enriches them. And so with other musical instruments. Ask your friend in the band or orchestra to remove the mouthpiece from his trombone, or trumpet, or clarinet, and blow a blast upon it. The thin, squawky, colorless bleat is what the human voice might sound like if the head were amputated just above the larynx; if, in other words, the resonators were removed from the mechanism of voice production. For the human resonators are in the head. They are three in number: the nasal cavity, the mouth, and the pharynx (or region above the larynx and behind the tongue). It is probable that the sinuses do not serve any useful function as resonators. Chest resonance

¹ Students interested in the physics of resonance should see Lyman Spicer Judson and Andrew Thomas Weaver, *Voice Science* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1942).

is probably a kind of sympathetic "sounding board" vibration.² Changes in voice quality must be accomplished by changes in the relative size and shape of these resonance cavities.

Limitations in the improvement of resonance. The value of any resonator depends partly upon its size and shape, the comparative width of its opening, etc. But it depends also partly upon the nature of the material of which it is made. A modern violinmaker can easily duplicate the exact dimensions of a Stradivarius, but he cannot duplicate the texture of the two-century-old wood of which it is made. There are limits, then, to the improvement that may be made in any human voice. A better habit of resonance may be developed by improving the habits of the tongue, palate, and lips, but the material substance of the human resonators cannot be changed. A voice is what it is, and is distinguishable from other voices, partly because of such individual factors as hardness of gums, shape of mouth-arch, thickness of cheeks, etc. It is important that students understand these limitations, and realize that efforts for improvement are limited by fixed and given conditions. They should understand that the advertiser who offered to develop in any singer a voice like Caruso's was an unscrupulous charlatan, trading upon human ignorance.

Possibilities of improvement in resonance. On the other hand it is important to realize that any poor voice can be materially improved by proper exercises. So long as the jaw, lips, tongue, and palate are movable and responsive, improvement is possible. However, there is no phase of voice improvement so elusive and intangible as voice "placement," or resonance. Some teachers resort to the descriptive terms mentioned above: "Direct the tone toward the front teeth," etc. Some instruct students to groove the tongue so as to make a trough through which the tone can flow. Others merely prescribe deep breathing, throat relaxation, and an open jaw, trusting that nature will prompt the best placement of the other agents of resonance. Some attempt so to train the student's ear that he can imitate his teacher's voice. Still others rely upon imaginative descriptions, asking the student to utter rings of tone, or waves of tone, and then listen to them as they float off into space. All of

² See Clarence T. Simon and Franklin Keller, "An Approach to the Problem of 'Chest Resonance,'" *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education* XIII (1927).

these devices are at times effective. But insofar as resonance can be analyzed and consciously controlled, it generally reduces to terms of nasality. The desired "placement" is one with the right amount of nasal resonance.

Teachers do not agree as to how much nasality is desirable in English vowels. British and German speech are much less nasal than American speech, and in Britain and Germany Americans are frequently criticized for their offensive nasal twang. On the other hand, British and German speakers often offend our ears by that peculiar dead quality of voice that suggests a cold in the head. The best singing teachers have generally encouraged nasal resonance as giving brilliance and color to the voice. Many teachers of speech feel that the best voice is that which carries to the vowels the same balance of resonance as is found in a hummed *m*. This seems to be a happy mean between the Yankee twang and the British cold-in-the-head tone, and probably brings us as near as we can come to a satisfactory solution of the problem of tone placement.

Summary. A good voice is one which has (1) the firm support which comes from diaphragmatic-abdominal breathing, (2) the freedom from strain and tension which comes from a relaxed throat, and (3) the pleasing color or quality which comes from well-balanced resonance.

Exercises for Tone Placement

1. With breath firmly supported and throat relaxed, hum the consonant *m*. Open the mouth slowly, trying to avoid any change in the "placement" or "feel" of the tone. Let the jaw open wide, and the tongue drop, until the tone becomes "Italian *a*" as in *arm*. Then gradually close the mouth again without stopping the tone, trying not to make any change in placement. Repeat this slow alternation of *m*'s and *ah*'s until the breath is exhausted. The sound made may be represented thus:

mmmm-ah-h-mmmm-ah-h-mmmm-ah-h-mmmm.

2. When the open *ah* can be made easily with the same resonance or placement as the hummed *m*, try changing from one to the other very rapidly: mah-mah-mah-mah-mah-mah-m.

3. Beginning with *m* change to *ah* and hold this sound as long as the breath lasts, trying to keep the tone steady by a gradual relaxation of the diaphragm. Make the tone rich, round, and full, and try to feel its reverberations through all the resonance cavities.

4. Try the same with *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u*.

5. Try the same, increasing the volume of the tone toward the middle point of its duration, and then letting it die away. It will be difficult at first to increase volume without altering the resonance, but you can do it with practice. Do not make the crescendo so long, or the peak of the swell so high, that no breath will be left for the diminuendo.

Reading Exercises

We have been studying the methods of voice improvement in order, among other reasons, to be able to read fine poetry with moving expression. But it should be noted that the reading of poetry is in itself one of the best means of voice improvement. If one reads with free responsiveness to the feeling and imagination of good poetry, he helps to achieve the very physical qualities of good voice that we have been considering. Deep and sustained emotion will deepen the breathing, and relax the throat, and give clarity and resonance to the voice. All reading is in a sense a vocal exercise, and there is no better reading exercise than the interpretation of good poetry.

The selections that follow should be approached from two angles. Make the analysis of thought, mood, and rhythm as required in previous chapters. But in addition try to apply the teachings of this chapter to the voicing of each word and line. It will be difficult, of course, to keep your mind on the sense of the lines while at the same time being conscious of your breathing, the tension of your throat, and the quality of your tones. The fact that you can make a good tone when sounding a single vowel does not indicate that you will do equally well on the same vowel when it is buried in a phrase whose meaning you are trying to express. Our present problem is to carry over into articulate speech the good quality developed by the exercises. This can best be done by first intoning the lines of the poem on a monopitch, and then gradually working away from this monotone to the varied cadences of rational expression.

Follow this order: Make the usual analysis for meaning. Then practice the breathing exercises until you are sure of expansion at the waistline on every inhalation. Then do the exercises for relaxing the throat. Next, after a hummed *m*, intone the various vowel sounds.

When you feel that a good tone has been established, try chanting on a perfectly constant pitch the first line of the poem. Accentuate the rhythm by dwelling strongly and firmly on the accented syllables and skipping lightly over the unaccented syllables.

Listen carefully to detect whether you retain throughout the line the full resonance of the hummed *m*. If you lose it, go back to the *mmm-ah* exercise again, and repeat the line from that base. At first you will need to sound the hum before each line, but gradually you will learn to go through a whole stanza or poem without having to correct your resonance in this way.

Be sure also that you take a deep full breath at the beginning of every line. Do this mechanically until it becomes a habit. Do not wait until breath is exhausted before refilling the lungs. Inhale at every stopping place. In the selections that follow you will find that the sense is so fitted to the verse pattern that a stop at the end of a line seldom breaks a word-group. Learn to fill the lungs by means of "catch-breaths," that is, quick, sharp intakes of breath through the mouth. And *take them often*. No one can produce a good tone on a failing breath supply.

The procedure recommended may be represented thus:

(Inhale) mmm-ah-h- (Inhale) The cu—rfew to—lls the kne—ll of
pa—rting day—,
(Inhale) mmm-ah-h- (Inhale) The low—ing he—rd wind slow—ly
o—'er the lea—.

This chanted monotone is excellent for establishing good voice but of course it is not to be used habitually. It is neither speech nor song, for both speech and song have melody. Our problem now is to retain good voice quality while reading these lines with normal expressional variation.

It should be noted that the melody of speech differs from the melody of song not in general melodic pattern, but in the shorter duration of time during which single syllables are held upon constant pitches. A spoken word may vary in pitch by sliding evenly through several intervals of the musical scale. A questioning *Yes?* may begin on middle C and slide up a full octave, or more, or less. A *sung* word may slide from one pitch to another, but it will pause momentarily on some or all of these pitch frequencies. The change from song to speech, then, or from intoning to speech, is made by ceasing to dwell for any noticeable interval upon a fixed pitch. Our conventional musical notation cannot accurately represent the melodic pattern of the voice in speech, though many attempts to do so have been made by phoneticians and

elocutionists.³ We should remember also that no one can say with final authority just what the melodic pattern of a given line or sentence should be. In changing an intoned phrase to a spoken phrase we can only be guided by what seems a sensible expression of its meaning.

In reading the selections that follow, the rhythm and tempo of the intoned reading should be retained when changing from intonation to speech. This should help to retain the voice quality used during intonation. Our present problem is to modify only the melodic pattern. If tone support and good resonance are not to be lost, this modification should be gradual. Try to make at least three steps between the intoned reading with which you begin, and the rational reading with which you end. And even in the final reading which seems to you appropriate there should remain a good deal of the initial intonation, or monopitch, for poetry was originally written to be sung, and even in modern times it should retain some of the quality of song. Finally, do not lose sight of the object of this exercise, which is to carry over into expressive reading the voice quality established by intoning. At every stage of the exercise keep your ear on your voice. Breathe deeply at the beginning of every line, keep the throat relaxed, and make the tone vibrate freely through all the resonance cavities. Remember also that a free imaginative responsiveness to the mood and feeling of the selections here given will help to secure that desirable "good voice" for which we are laboring by a more mechanical method.

The gradations from intoning to conversational expression may be represented thus:

1. The curfew tolls the knell of parting day.

2. The ^{cur}few tolls the knell of ^{part}ing day.

3. The ^{cur}few tolls the knell of ^{part}ing day.

4. The ^{cur}few tolls the part
knell of ing
day.

³ See Daniel Jones, *An Outline of English Phonetics* (New York: G. E. Stechert & Co., 1922).

The second or third of these readings might be considered correct for a formal interpretation of poetry. The fourth suggests a rational prose reading.

PLAN OF STUDY

25. Inhale deeply and quickly at every convenient breathing place. Do not allow your breath supply to run low.

26. As the front wall of the waist contracts during utterance try to keep it hard and firm, resisting its inward pressure by a slowly relaxing diaphragm. That is, see that your voice is always firmly supported, and its tone evenly sustained.

27. Try always to read with a relaxed throat. Keep the voice free from strain. Note every word in your selection that begins with a vowel, and see that you attack it without a glottal stroke.

28. Try to keep the "feel" of the resonance centered in the front of the mouth. Avoid a lazy palate which allows too much nasality, and on the other hand the stopped tone which lacks all nasality. Seek the mean between these faults.

CRITERIA

24. Was the reader's voice well supported and evenly sustained?

25. Was his voice free from strain and constriction?

26. Were initial vowels attacked without strain?

27. Did he have a well balanced resonance? Did he need more or less nasality?

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Distinguish voice quality from pronunciation, and both from expression.
2. The American Academy of Arts and Letters has awarded medals for good diction over the radio on the basis of these five factors: pronunciation, articulation, tone quality, accent, cultural effect. How would you define each?
3. Why is good voice quality important in the interpretation of poetry?
4. What are the characteristics of a good voice?
5. Describe in detail the processes of inhalation and exhalation.

6. Why is diaphragmatic-abdominal breathing desirable?
7. Why is throat relaxation desirable?
8. Exactly where and how is voice produced?
9. What is "glottal attack"? Why is it to be avoided?
10. Different voice qualities, such as hard, bell-like, piercing, are due to what?
11. Upon what factors does possible voice improvement depend?
12. As regards nasality, what is desirable in a voice?

SELECTIONS FOR PRACTICE

From ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

Thomas Gray

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight, 5
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain 10
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid, 15
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn, 20
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

FEAR NO MORE THE HEAT O' THE SUN

William Shakespeare

Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages: 5
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

READING ALOUD

Fear no more the frown o' the great,
 Thou art past the tyrant's stroke;
 Care no more to clothe and eat;
 To thee the reed is as the oak:
 The sceptre, learning, physic, must
 All follow this, and come to dust.

10

Fear no more the lightning-flash
 Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;
 Fear not slander, censure rash;
 Thou hast finished joy and moan:
 All lovers young, all lovers must
 Consign to thee, and come to dust.

15

THE GLORIES OF OUR BLOOD AND STATE

James Shirley

The glories of our blood and state
 Are shadows, not substantial things;
 There is no armour against fate;
 Death lays his icy hand on kings:
 Sceptre and crown
 Must tumble down,
 And in the dust be equal made
 With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

5

Some men with swords may reap the field,
 And plant fresh laurels where they kill;
 But their strong nerves at last must yield;
 They tame but one another still:
 Early or late,
 They stoop to fate,
 And must give up their murmuring breath,
 When they, pale captives, creep to death.

10

15

The garlands wither on your brow,
 Then boast no more your mighty deeds;
 Upon Death's purple altar now,
 See where the victor-victim bleeds:
 Your heads must come
 To the cold tomb;
 Only the actions of the just
 Smell sweet and blossom in their dust.

20

COMRADES

Richard Hovey

Comrades, pour the wine to-night ,
 For the parting is with dawn!
 Oh, the clink of cups together,
 With the daylight coming on!
 Greet the morn 5
 With a double horn,
 When strong men drink together!

Comrades, gird your swords to-night,
 For the battle is with dawn!
 Oh, the clash of shields together, 10
 With the triumph coming on!
 Greet the foe,
 And lay him low,
 When strong men fight together!

Comrades, watch the tides to-night, 15
 For the sailing is with dawn!
 Oh, to face the spray together,
 With the tempest coming on!
 Greet the sea
 With a shout of glee, 20
 When strong men roam together!

Comrades, give a cheer to-night,
 For the dying is with dawn!
 Oh, to meet the stars together,
 With the silence coming on! 25
 Greet the end
 As a friend a friend,
 When strong men die together!

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

Lord Byron

She walks in beauty, like the night
 Of cloudless climes and starry skies,
 And all that's best of dark and bright
 Meet in her aspect and her eyes,
 Thus mellowed to that tender light 5
 Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less
 Had half impaired the nameless grace
 Which waves in every raven tress
 Or softly lightens o'er her face, 10
 Where thoughts serenely sweet express
 How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

 And on that cheek and o'er that brow
 So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
 The smiles that win, the tints that glow, 15
 But tell of days in goodness spent,—
 A mind at peace with all below,
 A heart whose love is innocent.

From IN MEMORIAM

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
 Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
 By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
 Believing where we cannot prove;

 Thine are these orbs of light and shade; 5
 Thou madest Life in man and brute;
 Thou madest Death; and lo, thy foot
 Is on the skull which thou hast made.

 Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
 Thou madest man, he knows not why, 10
 He thinks he was not made to die;
 And thou hast made him: thou art just.

 Thou seemest human and divine,
 The highest, holiest manhood, thou:
 Our wills are ours, we know not how; 15
 Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

 Our little systems have their day;
 They have their day and cease to be:
 They are but broken lights of thee,
 And thou, O Lord, art more than they. 20

THE INDIAN SERENADE

Percy Bysshe Shelley

I arise from dreams of thee
 In the first sweet sleep of night,
 When the winds are breathing low,
 And the stars are shining bright:
 I arise from dreams of thee, 5
 And a spirit in my feet
 Hath led me—who knows how!
 To thy chamber window, Sweet!

 The wandering airs they faint
 On the dark, the silent stream— 10
 And the Champak odors fail
 Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
 The nightingale's complaint,
 It dies upon her heart;—
 As I must on thine, 15
 O! beloved as thou art!

 Oh lift me from the grass!
 I die! I faint! I fail!
 Let thy love in kisses rain
 On my lips and eyelids pale. 20
 My cheek is cold and white, alas!
 My heart beats loud and fast;—
 Oh! press it to thine own again,
 Where it will break at last.

From THE ANCIENT MARINER*Samuel Taylor Coleridge*

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
 The furrow followed free;
 We were the first that ever burst
 Into that silent sea.

 Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,— 5
 'Twas sad as sad could be;
 And we did speak only to break
 The silence of the sea.

All in a hot and copper sky
The bloody sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the moon. 10

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck,—nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean. 15

Water, water everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink. 20

The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea!

About, about, in reel and rout,
The deathfires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white. 25

Chapter 6

PRONUNCIATION

IN READING, as in all the forms of speaking, and especially in reading poetry, it goes without saying that words should be properly pronounced. Pronunciation must be intelligible. And besides being easily understood it should be pleasant to the ear, not labored, affected, pedantic, or slovenly. It will most nearly satisfy these requirements when it is inconspicuous, when it does not attract attention to itself. And it will satisfy this requirement when it conforms to the accepted standard of the listeners, when it meets their expectation of how good speech should sound. We must assume, of course, that our listeners are persons of some culture who are accustomed to hearing English well spoken. "The standard of English pronunciation," says *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, "so far as a standard may be said to exist, is the usage that now prevails among the educated and cultured people to whom the language is vernacular."

In reading poetry there is a special need for accurate pronunciation and careful articulation. In early times poetry was composed to be sung, and in all times poets have meant it to be heard. Though "modern" poetry reaches its audience as print, it is none the less true that the best of it is essentially a series of sounds addressed to the ear, and that it can be rightly appreciated only when heard.

Causes of poor pronunciation. The speech of young readers is so often neither clear nor conventional that we need to spend some time and effort in attempting to improve it. Probably the two chief causes of faulty pronunciation are carelessness and ignorance. We are all prone to negligence in daily speech. We take short cuts, and

telescope sounds that ought to stand apart, and substitute one sound for another. This is a natural tendency in all speakers of all languages. But what is commonly called carelessness in pronunciation is not always to be condemned and avoided. It is one of the inevitable developments in a living language. Some of the careless pronunciations of our English-speaking ancestors have become firmly established in correct cultured speech. For example, they reduced such words as *moved*, *hopped*, and *pinned* from two syllables to one; they dropped the initial *k* or *g* from *knife*, *know*, *gnaw*, and *gnat*, and introduced a *sh* sound into such words as *social*, *ancient*, and *cautious*; and these "corruptions" are now standard in cultivated speech. Just what does it mean, then, to pronounce carefully? In our laudable attempt to avoid careless pronunciations we may become victims of our ignorance of linguistic usage and development, for only those who have made a careful study of English phonetics are competent to decide what is "careful" speech and what is not.

Modern spelling is obsolete. The most important fact that we should understand about our language is that modern spelling is not a dependable guide to modern pronunciation. Let anyone who doubts it try to pronounce letter by letter the following words: *tongue*, *Lincoln*, *couple*, *psalm*, *carriage*, *talk*, *thorough*, *debt*, *knight*, *guide*, *sword*, *lose*, *righteous*, *women*. It should be understood that English, like other languages, was spoken long before any attempt was made to reduce it to writing. An alphabet is merely a series of symbols agreed upon by which sounds are designated to the eye. The Anglo-Saxons had developed a crude alphabet, but later the Roman alphabet was imposed upon them and it never has been a satisfactory method of indicating English sounds. How could it be when English has many sounds that the Romans did not have? With their alphabet of twenty-six letters we try to represent some forty or fifty different sounds.

The spellings we now use were designed for the language as it was pronounced four or five hundred years ago, and meantime many changes in pronunciation have occurred without a corresponding change in spelling. Some of these changes were mentioned above, but there have been many others. Some consonants have become silent, or have changed their value, and our vowels

have become so unreliable that in a large proportion of words they do not give a clear index of pronunciation. For instance, these pairs of words with similar spellings do not rhyme: *all, shall; move, stove; form, worm; ever, fever; power, mower; wholly, jolly*. Perhaps the most remarkable divergence has developed in words spelled with *ough*. This combination of letters now has nine different pronunciations—as in *bough, bought, through, though, tough, cough, hough, borough, and hiccough*—and none of them is like the sound those letters originally stood for. These irregularities are familiar to all of us, and yet when we attempt to pronounce carefully, our first impulse is to pronounce according to spelling.

If, then, spelling cannot be depended upon to tell us how words are pronounced, where shall we turn for a guide? We can only depend upon the usage that now prevails among cultivated speakers of English, vague and wavering as that standard is.

The designation of sounds. No method of translating ear symbols into eye symbols is completely satisfactory. The one most employed is the system of diacritical marks of the Webster, and other, dictionaries, but these designations are unsatisfactory in several ways. First, the names used for the symbols, when they have names, are misleading or meaningless. For instance, the difference between “long *a*” and “short *a*” is not a difference of length at all, and such terms as “soft,” “broad,” “circumflex,” etc., do not help us to pronounce or to identify the sounds to which they are applied. Secondly, there is not a uniform correspondence between symbols and sounds; one sound may have more than one symbol, and one symbol may refer to more than one sound. Thirdly, the vowel sound which probably occurs most often in English speech, the “neutral vowel,” *a* in *ago*, has no name, and no single symbol, but is represented by italicizing any of the five vowels together with a misleading diacritical mark, as in *sofà, recēnt, vanity, bacōn, circūs*. Fourthly, some diphthongs are represented by one letter, and others by two.

Some teachers attempt to escape these inconsistencies and irregularities by employing the International Phonetic Alphabet, in which each sound has one, and only one, symbol, and each symbol represents one, and only one, sound. But this system too has its inadequacies for our purposes. It is not used in any of the standard

dictionaries to which we commonly go for information about words, and the symbols are not uniform in the books that might be of most help to us, practically all writers on phonetics feeling obliged to make some additions to, or modifications of, the phonetic alphabet.

Another method of designating sounds is by key words, as when we identify a sound as the *a* in *father*, the *o* in *hope*, or the *l* in *help*. This method, too, is unreliable, for we cannot be sure that all speakers pronounce our key word in the same way. For instance, the vowel in *hope* as pronounced by a cultivated Englishman bears little resemblance to the one commonly heard in America.

The most satisfactory method of identifying sounds is by describing their organic formation; for instance, designating *d* as a "voiced tongue-point alveolar stop," and *o* as a "mid-back lip-rounded vowel." Such designations are, however, inordinately cumbersome, and can hardly be used every time a sound is referred to. Since sounds need to be heard to be identified, it is extremely difficult to write clearly about pronunciation. In the ensuing treatment we shall employ all of these methods, getting whatever help we can from each of them, but relying chiefly upon the generally familiar Webster key. When the symbols of the phonetic alphabet are used, they will be enclosed in brackets to distinguish them from other symbols. The main authorities drawn from are the *Guide to Pronunciation in Webster's New International Dictionary*, Second Edition;¹ *A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English*, by John S. Kenyon and Thomas A. Knott;² and *American Pronunciation*, Tenth Edition, by John S. Kenyon.³

Vowel formation. We found in the preceding chapter that the quality or timbre of the voice was due largely to certain variable factors in the resonance chambers. This basic resonance is further modified to form the various vowel sounds, and in making these modifications the tongue is the principal agent.

For all vowel sounds the tongue forms a hump which partly separates the front of the mouth cavity from the back of the mouth

¹ *Webster's New International Dictionary* (2d ed.; Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriam Co., 1950).

² John Samuel Kenyon and Thomas A. Knott, *A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English* (Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriam Co., 1944).

³ John Samuel Kenyon, *American Pronunciation* (10th ed.; Ann Arbor, Mich.: George Wahr, 1950).

and pharynx. The size and shape of the two resonance chambers thus formed are the chief factors that determine different vowel qualities. If the tongue is humped very high in the front of the mouth, almost touching the hard palate, so that there is a very small chamber in front of the hump and a much larger one behind it, the sound made is the vowel \bar{e} [i], as in *eat*, *meet*, *flee*. If the jaw is dropped, so that the hump of the tongue is much lower, and the lips are wide open, the sound made is \bar{a} [æ], as in *cat*, *bad*, *man*. If the tongue is humped high in the back of the mouth, and if the lip opening is very small and rounded, the resultant vowel will be \bar{o} [u], as in *boot*, *do*, *rude*. If the hump is in the back of the mouth, but much lower, because the jaw is dropped, and if the lips are held wide open, the sound made is \bar{a} [a], as in *father*, *far*, *calm*.

These are the four corners of what may be called the "vowel diagram." All the other vowels are made with the tongue hump in positions between these corner positions. Beginning with the high-front \bar{e} , the successive vowels made as the jaw drops and the hump is lowered are \bar{i} [ɪ] as in *mit*, \bar{a} [e] as in *mate*, \bar{e} [ɛ] as in *met*, and finally \bar{a} [æ] as in *cat*. These are the front vowels.

Beginning with the high-back \bar{o} , the successive vowels made as the jaw opens and the lip opening remains rounded are \bar{o} [ʊ] as in *foot*, \bar{o} [o] as in *oak*, \bar{o} [ɔ] as in *orb*, and finally, without lip rounding, \bar{a} as in *father*. These are the back vowels.

If the tongue lies relaxed, slightly humped in the middle, with the jaw nearly closed, the resultant sound is the mid-central neutral vowel, or "schwa," illustrated by *a* in *soda*, *ago*, *orator*. It occurs only in unaccented syllables. The Webster dictionaries have no distinctive diacritical mark for it but indicate it by italicizing the vowel with which it is spelled. In the phonetic alphabet it is represented by an inverted *e* [ə]. If the tongue hump is a little lower and farther back toward the \bar{a} position, and more tense, the sound made is \bar{u} [ʌ], as in *tub*, *dove*, *run*. If the body of the tongue is higher and the tip turned up toward the hard palate, the resultant sound is the "r-colored" vowel \bar{u} [ɜ], as in *urge*, *bird*, *worm*, or, in unaccented syllables, \bar{e} [ɜ], as in *over*, *liar*, *tailor*. These are the central vowels.

Many speakers in the Eastern and Southern parts of the United States do not use these r-colored vowels. They pronounce such

words as *urge* and *over* as here described but without turning up the tip of the tongue. The Webster dictionaries do not distinguish between these regional pronunciations. The phonetic symbols are [ɜ] for the *r*-less vowel in *urge*, and [ə] for the second syllable of *over*.

Two additional vowels are used by some speakers in some parts of America. The first is intermediate in position between *ă* as in *cat*, and *ä* as in *father*. This vowel, *â* [a], is often heard in New England and New York City in such words as *ask*, *answer*, *class*, *last*, *bath*. Such words are regularly marked in Webster's as *â*, though the prevailing pronunciation is *ă*, and some speakers use *ä*. The second sound is a slightly rounded *ä* [ɔ] sometimes heard in such words as *soft*, *sorry*, *moral*. Webster's symbol for it is either *ô* or *ö*. It is not in wide use in America, but is common in England.

To help fix the vowel positions in memory it is well to practice sentences containing the sounds in their successive order, as, for the front vowels, "We will make red mats"; for the back vowels, "You could grow tall palms"; and for the central vowels, "Turn the rug."

Diphthongs. Sometimes two vowels combine so closely that the tongue glides from one to the other without a break in the tone. Such glides are called diphthongs (not to be confused with the combination of two *letters* in spelling, as *ea* or *th* in *breath*). Some of them we do not readily identify because they are spelled with one letter instead of two. So-called "long *i*" as in *ice* is a diphthong, made by a quick glide from *â* to *î*. The phonetic symbol [aɪ] shows its double quality. The diphthong *oi* glides from *ô* to *î*. Words with this sound are represented in Webster's as *oi* without diacritical marking, and in the phonetic alphabet as [ɔɪ]. A third diphthong, *ou* as in *out*, *house*, *cow* [au], is also without diacritical marking. It glides from *ă*, *â*, or *ä* to *ôô* or *ôô*. With some speakers "long *u*" is also a diphthong in some words, gliding from *î* to *ôô*. With others it is pronounced *yoo*, as in *fuse*, *abuse*, *mute*. The Webster marking for both forms is *û*, the phonetic marking [ɪu] or [ju]. "Long *a*" and "long *o*" are also diphthongal when stressed, as in *day* and *grow*.

This is a highly simplified account of vowel sounds, but it will serve our present purpose.

Consonants. It is difficult to define consonants as a class of sounds wholly different from those that we classify as vowels. Some of them are very like some vowels. Consonant *y*, for instance, is often hardly distinguishable from the vowel *ĩ*. The words *alien*, *filial*, *Indian* may be pronounced with either. Consonant *y* is formed by placing the tongue in the position for *ĩ* and gliding quickly from that position to whatever vowel follows, for it is always followed by a vowel. In similar manner *w* is formed by placing the tongue and lips in the position for *õ* and gliding quickly to the following vowel. And consonant *r* begins in the position of vowel *ûr* and glides to the following vowel. These three sounds are classified as glides; they are made while the organs of speech are moving from one position to another; they occur only before vowels. Post-vowel *y*, *w*, and *r*, as in *boy*, *cow*, and *far*, are to be considered not as consonants, but as vowels, each being part of a diphthong. Syllabic *y*, as in *city*, *very*, *any*, is also a vowel.

In general we may say that consonants are less open than vowels, being formed by stopping momentarily the flow of breath or voice, or by squeezing it through a narrow opening so that sometimes friction is produced. If the flow is stopped by closing the lips, the sound that results is *p* [p] or *b* [b]. If it is stopped by pressing the edges of the tongue firmly against the upper gum ridge, the sound made is *t* [t] or *d* [d]. If the stoppage is made by pressing the back of the tongue against the velum (soft palate), the sound is *k* [k] or *g* [g]. These six are called "stop" consonants. The first of each pair of stops, *p*, *t*, and *k*, is made with breath alone, but for *b*, *d*, and *g* the vocal cords vibrate while the organs are in the stopped position, and so they are called voiced stops. If the velum is lowered during these three stoppages so that the nasal cavity is open for the passage of the tone, the three sounds made are, successively, *m*, *n*, and *ng*, [m], [n], and [ŋ]. The following table will help to make clear the similarities and differences of these nine sounds:

	Lips closed	Tongue tip on gum ridge	Tongue back against velum
Voiceless stops	<i>p</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>k</i>
Voiced stops	<i>b</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>g</i>
Nasal continuants	<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>ng</i>

Among the remaining consonants also there are pairs that have the same organic formation but differ from each other only in that one is made by breath alone and the other by voiced breath, or vocal cord vibration. Such a pair of sounds are *f* [f] and *v* [v], formed by squeezing the breath or voice out between the upper teeth and lower lip. Another pair are *th* [θ] as in *thin*, and *th* [ð] as in *then*, formed by squeezing breath or voice out between the upper teeth and the tongue. For *s* [s] and *z* [z] the blade of the tongue is so placed as to form a narrow channel between itself and the upper gums, and a thin jet of breath is forced through this channel and strikes the points of the lower teeth. The jaw must be slightly open so that the lower teeth will be in position to split this jet of air. If the tongue is drawn back a little from this position and slightly relaxed, so that there is a wider channel between it and the palate, the sounds made are *sh* [ʃ] as in *show*, and *zh* [ʒ] as in *vision*. These eight sounds are called *fricatives*.

Some phoneticians would classify *wh* [hw] as in *when* as the voiceless equivalent of *w*, and some speakers pronounce it so. Webster's describes it as usually two sounds, *h* followed by *w*, and designates it by the symbol *hw*. The phonetic symbol for the voiceless *w* is [ʍ].

Consonant *l* [l] is formed by placing the tongue point against the gum ridge as for *t*, *d*, and *n*, but contracting the blade laterally so that the voice passes around the sides of the tongue. It has no voiceless equivalent. *H* [h] as in *hot* is probably made by friction of the breath between the vocal cords, and with the mouth shaped for whatever sound follows it. It is voiceless, and has no voiced equivalent.

Two other consonants function as single sounds, though they are really double. The first, *ch* as in *chair*, *much*, *mention*, is a combination of *t* and *sh*. Its voiced equivalent is usually spelled with *j* or *g*, as in *jaw*, *gem*, and is a combination of *d* and *zh*. Webster's represents the first by *ch*, and the second by *j*, except when they are formed by an assimilation of *t* or *d* with *ū*, as in *virtue*, *nature*, *gradual*, *verdure*, when they are represented by a tie under the two letters from which they are formed, *tū*, *dū*. Their phonetic symbols are [tʃ] and [dʒ].

It should be understood that *th*, *sh*, *zh*, and *ng* are single sounds though each is represented by two letters. Note that *c*, *q*, and *x* are

not used in the representation of sounds. The following table summarizes the consonant sounds:

	Stops	Fricatives	Nasals	Lateral	Glides
Voiceless	<i>p, t, k</i>	<i>f, s, th, sh, ch, h</i>			
Voiced	<i>b, d, g</i>	<i>v, z, th, zh, j</i>	<i>m, n, ng</i>	<i>l</i>	<i>w, y, r</i>

Historical changes. This analysis of the separate sounds of the language does not explain why our spelling is such a poor guide to pronunciation. We have already noted that spelling as we know it was designed to represent the sounds our words had some four or five hundred years ago. Meantime there have been many changes in pronunciation without a corresponding change in spelling. Most of these can be grouped under three general tendencies or movements in the history of spoken English, and we can understand our present muddle and make intelligent judgments about the sounds of words only when we know something of these historical developments. The first is known as "the great vowel shift."

The great vowel shift. Since the time of Chaucer (1400) the main English vowels have changed their quality by each moving up to a higher tongue position. For instance, our word *bone* was formerly spelled with *a* and pronounced *bän*; *to* was pronounced as we now pronounce *toe*; *sea* was pronounced as *say*, and still earlier as *sä* (with the vowel of *sat*); and *meet* was sounded as *mate* now is. The two highest vowels, *ē* and *ōō*, became the diphthongs *ī* and *ou*; that is, *ice* and *house* were formerly *ees* and *hoos*. Some of these early vowels survive in Scotland, where one may still lie doon and dee for Annie Laurie. These shifts in vowel quality have thrown our vowels out of line with those in such languages as French, German, and Italian, so that we have difficulty with the pronunciation of such foreign names as *Weser*, *Hegel*, *Rouen*, *Milo*, *Gide*, *Proust*, *Weber*, and *Beethoven*. Since these changes were gradual, they account for some of the puzzling rhymes we find in Shakespeare and other poets of his time: *moan, gone; over, recover; come, doom; love, remove; feast, rest; eye, liberty; nature, feature*; etc. In one stage of its development, "long *i*" was pronounced the same as *oi*. This accounts for such eighteenth century rhymes as *joy* and *cry*, *toil* and *smile*, *joined* and *find*. A few words, such as *route*,

dour, *either*, and *deaf*, are apparently still in a state of transition from one pronunciation to another.

Gradation. Another historical tendency is that whereby vowels, when they cease to be accented, lose their original quality and take on the quality of the neutral vowel, or schwa (*a* as in *ago*). The higher front vowels may instead be reduced to *ĩ*. For instance, in *manly* and *postman* the *a* of *man* has two distinctly different pronunciations; in *manly* it is a low front *ǎ*, but in *postman* it is a schwa vowel. Both vowels in *ob'-ject* as a noun are different from the same vowels in *ob-ject'* as a verb. In the noun the second syllable is *-jĩkt*, and in the verb the first syllable has a schwa vowel. There is a similar difference between *rec'-ord* as noun, and *re-cord'* as verb. Sometimes when an unstressed vowel is followed by *l* or *n* it is completely lost, and the consonant *l* or *n* carries the weight of the syllable, as in *cat'l*, *fɪd'l*, *cot'n*, *Lat'n*, for *cattle*, *fiddle*, *cotton*, *Latin*. This weakening is found also in some words of frequent use, such as *and*, *for*, *the*, *a*, *can*, *has*, *was*, and *will*, which in conversational speech rarely occur in their stressed forms. We say, You 'nd I, Two fer five, This'll do, He's found it, etc. These are standard cultured pronunciations in unconstrained conversation, and should not be looked upon as slovenly or careless.

Even in formal speech the italicized vowels in the following words should be reduced to the schwa vowel [ə]:

rational	preferable	Washington	husband	possible
fortune	action	irony	moral	charity
annoy	conscience	American	lettuce	monotone

The same is true of the following phrases:

How do you do?
That was the one.

Out of the way.
A piece of a rope.

If you give a strong pronunciation to these vowels when they ought to be weak and obscure, you will make your speech sound stilted, stiff, and pedantic. English when properly spoken has wide gradations of accent, and so of vowel quality. It is this characteristic of the language that makes the distinctive meter of poetry.

It should be noted, however, that the deliberate measured rhythm with which serious poetry should be read requires that many syllables receive more weight than in colloquial speech.

When the meter calls for a stress on what is normally a weak syllable, it is usually best to give it a somewhat stronger pronunciation. In these lines from a Wordsworth sonnet:

The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;

will, *at*, and *are* would normally be unstressed; but since the meter calls for a stress on each of them they should not be obscured. An additional reason for giving full value to *will* is the need to emphasize the similarity of its *w* to the *w* of *winds*, and its *l* to the *l*'s of *howling* and *all*.

Assimilation. Another development in the long history of English speech is the gradual assimilation of many consonant sounds to their neighbors. "Assimilation" means simply "becoming similar to." This, like many other developments of the language, is due to our tendency to take short cuts, to ease over the rough places of articulation, to make one position of the speech organs serve where two are called for. For instance, the word *in-come* seems to call for an *n*, followed by a *k*; but it is easier to anticipate the position of *k* by pronouncing the *n* as *ng*, since both *ng* and *k* are tongue-back velar sounds, so we say *ing-kum*. We make the same assimilation in *congress* and *conquer*. Such past-tense forms as *hoped*, *washed*, and *kicked* were formerly pronounced with two syllables, as the spelling indicates. But when the *e* ceased to be sounded, a voiced *d* was brought next to voiceless *p*, *sh*, or *k*, and this caused it to lose its voiced quality and become *t*, so that these words are now pronounced *hopt*, *washt*, *kickt*. This change has taken place in all verbs that end with a voiceless consonant (except those ending in *t* or *d*) and is now standard and universal. After voiced sounds, however, as in *sag*, *kill*, *name*, *love*, *hoe*, we continue to pronounce *d*. Our plurals, possessives, and third person singular endings are affected in a similar way. We spell them all with *s*, and we pronounce *s* after voiceless sounds, as "He takes Philip's cats." But after voiced sounds, though we write, for instance, "He calls John's dogs," we pronounce, "He callz Johnz dogz."

According to the same principle, *cupboard*, *handkerchief*, *raspberry*, and *grandma*, formerly pronounced as their spelling indicates, are now generally pronounced *kuberd*, *hangkerchif*, *razberry*, and *gramma*.

Such assimilations as these we make unconsciously, and they give us no trouble. But there is another widespread assimilation that causes a good deal of uncertainty. It is the tendency to assimilate *t*, *d*, *s*, or *z* with a following *γ*, thus forming *sh* or *zh*. A common example is in the word *sure*, which, when pronounced as spelled, was *syōōr*. (Remember that "long *u*" begins with *γ*.) Here, as in other cases, we make one position serve for two contiguous sounds, but in this case the tongue position for *sh* is midway between the positions for *s* and *γ*. Other words in which this assimilation takes place are *sugar*, *issue*, *tissue*, *pressure*, *nauseous*, *special*, *ocean*, *conscience*, *mission*, etc. In such words as *mission*, formerly pronounced with three syllables, miss-i-on, the *ī* gradually weakened so that at about the time of Shakespeare the pronunciation was *miss-yon*. Then the *s* and *γ* gradually assimilated to *sh*. This development may be clearer if we set down the descriptions of the sounds involved, with ditto marks to show the similarities, thus:

		s—voiceless	tongue-blade		alveolar		fricative
combines with	γ—voiced	"	"	—front	"	palatal	glide
to form	sh—voiceless	"	"	"	"	"	fricative

In a similar manner, *z* (generally spelled with *s*), combines with *γ* to form *zh*, as in *vision*, *glazier*, *confusion*, *decision*, *azure*, *pleasure*, *usual*, etc.

In words where *t* or *d* is followed by *γ*, or a weak *ī* which became *γ*, a similar change occurred. *Partial* is now *parshul*, *cordial* is *kordzhul*, *feature* is *featshur*, and so with *verdure*, *ratio*, *question*, *righteous*, *nature*, *soldier*, *gradual*, *grandeur*, *educate*, *credulous*, and many others.

The hundreds of words ending in *-tion*, and some others, have a curious history. They were borrowed from the French language, and were spelled at first in the French manner with *-cion*. It was this *c*, pronounced *s* of course, which combined with the weak *ī*, later *γ*, to form *sh*, as illustrated above. But the scholars of the sixteenth century were aware that these words were derived from Latin, in which language they were spelled with *t*, so they substituted *t* for the French spelling. The result is that our word *nation*, derived from old French *nacion*, contains a *t* that has never been pronounced in English. There are hundreds of similar cases.

Most of these assimilations are standard and uniform in all spoken English. There are, however, some cautious purists, per-

haps too conscious of spelling, who object to the normal easy pronunciation of such words as *nature*, *literature*, *educate*. But these assimilations are so generally accepted by the best authorities on pronunciation that there is no valid objection to their use even in the most formal reading.

It should be noted that in informal speech there is a tendency to make the same assimilations in such phrases as *did you*, *won't you*, *I shall miss you*, *shut your eyes*, etc. Though these are generally acceptable in relaxed familiar speech, they are better avoided in formal reading situations.

These examples of the disparity between spelling and pronunciation should not lead to the conclusion that spelling can be ignored in pronouncing words. For the great majority of words it is still a helpful, if imperfect, guide. It may tell us little or nothing about the pronunciation of such words as *one*, *eye*, *who*, *choir*, *women*, *righteous*, *colonel*, *tough*, and *ewe*, but it is of great help in such words as *medieval*, *misanthrope*, *ingenuousness*, *statistics*, *athletic*, *authoritatively*, *homogeneous*, and *fatuous*, all of which are frequently mispronounced because the reader does not look sharply at the spelling.

A standard of pronunciation. It should be obvious from this discussion that there is no single universal standard for the pronunciation of all English words. Words may be modified by their context, by the formality of the occasion on which they are spoken, and by the regional background of the speaker. We have already seen how they may be modified by their environment. Let us note now how they may be modified by different levels of formality.

Even the most careful and cultivated speakers may be expected to vary their pronunciation to suit the occasion on which they speak. What is appropriate in familiar colloquial speech may not be appropriate in formal public reading, and vice versa, and yet each form of speech may be quite correct for the time and place in which it is used. The problem for each of us is to find the level of formality appropriate for the occasion on which he speaks. For instance, in formal reading we will probably pronounce the first *n* in *government*, though we omit it in informal conversation. But to reduce the word to *guvment*, *gumment*, or just *gumt* can hardly be approved at any level, though these forms are common.

The Kenyon-Knott dictionary gives seven different pronunciations for the word *literature*, and it would be remarkable to find in one college five professors of literature who agreed in their pronunciation of the word. To give every letter in the word a full value would sound pedantic to most ears, and to reduce it to *litacher* would sound slovenly. What is to be sought is one of the gradations between these extremes. Good speech has been defined as the golden mean between the slipshod and the pedantic. When a word has several acceptable forms, the proper one for a given occasion can hardly be learned from a dictionary. Kenyon-Knott gives ten or more pronunciations for the conjunction *and*, but it cannot tell you just when each is appropriate. You can learn such things only by listening to the speech of the best speakers.

When we try to discover who *are* the best speakers we are again in difficulty, but there are several principles that will help us. We will surely not take any man as a model unless the English language is his native tongue, unless he has spoken it from childhood. We will require that he be well educated, particularly in English literature, and also that he shall have traveled widely among English-speaking people, so that his speech may be free from dialect and provincialism. One who has spent his life east of the Hudson River may be as poor a model as one who has always lived beyond the wide Missouri.

Regional differences. If this cosmopolitan person could be found, we might still be aware that his speech had regional characteristics that marked it off from that of an equally qualified person from a different region. The cultivated New Englander and the cultivated Southerner do not speak alike, and both differ in some respects from cultivated speakers in the rest of the country, the "General American" region.⁴ These differences lie partly in melodies too elusive to define, and partly in habits of tension and relaxation, but they lie chiefly in variant pronunciations of particular words.

The chief difference is in the treatment of *r*. In New England and New York City, and in the Old South, *r* is typically not sounded when it follows a vowel in the same syllable (*far*, *here*,

⁴ For an analysis of regional differences in America see C. K. Thomas, *An Introduction to the Phonetics of American English* (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1947), Chapter xxi.

poor), unless another vowel follows (*parade, carry, here it is*), and the “*r*-vowels” (*fur, word, over, pertain*) are pronounced without *r* quality. Another difference is the use by Easterners of the low-back *ä* of *father*, or a vowel near it, in such words as *ask, path, last, dance, class*, and *aunt*, where speakers in other regions use the low-front *ǎ* of *cat*. There are other peculiarities in all regions, but these are the most noticeable.

There is little point in trying to defend one of these regional pronunciations as superior to the others, to argue, for instance, that *ä* in *aunt* is more beautiful than *ǎ*. In all regions there are hundreds of words in which each of these sounds occurs; there are only a few words on which the various regions differ. And in the “*r*-less” regions it is only in certain positions that *r* is not sounded. Robert Bridges, late Poet Laureate of England, opposed Southern British speech as a standard because its omission of *r* in many words made for a large number of homophones, there being no clear distinction between *cart* and *cot*, *sworn* and *swan*, *court* and *caught*, *source* and *sauce*, etc.⁵ Still, there would seem to be no clinching argument—logical, physiological, cultural, historical, or aesthetic—either for or against the omission of *r*, though the *r*-speakers are in an overwhelming majority.

⁵ The play upon *orphan* and *often* in Gilbert and Sullivan’s *Pirates of Penzance* is a good example:

GENERAL. I ask you, have you ever known what it is to be an orphan?

KING. Often!

GEN. Yes, orphan. Have you ever known what it is to be one?

KING. I say, often.

GEN. I don’t think we quite understand one another. I ask you, have you ever known what it is to be an orphan, and you say “orphan.” As I understand you, you are merely repeating the word “orphan” to show that you understand me.

KING. I didn’t repeat the word often.

GEN. Pardon me, you did indeed.

KING. I only repeated it once.

GEN. True, but you repeated it.

KING. But not often.

GEN. Stop: I think I see where we are getting confused. When you said “orphan,” did you mean “orphan”—a person who has lost his parents, or “often”—frequently?

KING. Ah! I beg your pardon—I see what you mean—frequently.

GEN. Ah! you said often—frequently.

KING. No, only once.

GEN. Exactly—you said often, frequently, only once.

There are indications that these regional differences are becoming less marked. We are a fluid people, moving freely from one section of the country to another, and we are all subject to the influence of the same radio speakers and motion picture actors. It can hardly be doubted that these speakers are exerting a standardizing influence upon American speech. It may be that we shall ultimately achieve that universal standard which has been defined as the speech that does not attract attention to itself as being peculiar to any class or locality, but we will first have to become a much more homogeneous people.

Meantime it is probably best for each to follow the standard of his own region, for few of us can successfully adopt and practice a speech that is alien to our native community; and it is folly to expect that any standard can be legislated into universal use.

The poet's pronunciation. In the interpretation of poetry it is sometimes supposed that one ought to use the pronunciation intended by the poet, that one cannot interpret him faithfully unless one speaks as he did. A little reflection will show that such a practice is often quite impracticable. It is the present custom to modernize the pronunciation of all poetry written since about 1400 A.D. Some of the lines of Shakespeare might sound quite unintelligible to modern ears if pronounced as he intended them to sound. They have more meaning and beauty for us when pronounced in the modern way. And just so the works of a modern British poet may mean most to a General American audience when pronounced in the manner to which they are accustomed. It is true that a poet from one region will sometimes rhyme two words that are not sounded alike in another region. It is a little disturbing, for example, to a native of Illinois to find Stephen Spender rhyming *wrought* and *port*. And very likely an Englishman lifts a surprised eyebrow when he finds Vachel Lindsay rhyming *men* and *again*. More serious is the difficulty that arises from some of the rhymes current in the eighteenth century, such as *starve* and *reserve*, *art* and *desert*, *guard* and *heard*, *toil* and *smile*. None of these words had at that time the sounds we give them today. In such cases, where one must choose between violating the rhyme and violating modern usage, the most important consideration is probably the effect on one's audience. Very rarely is it desirable to have their

attention distracted from the meaning of a passage to the oddity of the reader's pronunciation.

Breath-groups. In Chapter 2 we found that meaning is best communicated through speech when the flow of words is divided into thought groups, or phrases, but little was said about the acoustic nature of these groups. We should note now that acoustically they are not groups of words, but groups of syllables, for the word is seldom a unit of spoken language. The separate letter sounds we have been studying are the smallest units of spoken language. They combine to form syllables, and syllables combine to form breath-groups. We may define a breath-group as the continuous flow of vocal sound between two breaks in the breath stream. It may contain only one word, but generally it contains several, and it may be quite long. In general, but not always, it will coincide with a word-group, or unit of meaning.

It follows that good speech does not require that each word be separated from its neighbors. The words of a phrase should be as closely tied together as the syllables of a word. The two words *go in*, when they occur together, should be as closely connected as the two syllables of *going*. The syllables of *can she enter* should be as fluid and continuous as those of *conscientious*. "Speaking every word distinctly" does not require that you stop the breath flow after each word. To do so is to make your utterance stilted, jolting, and less intelligible.

In reading poetry it is especially important that breath-groups coincide with thought groups, for nothing will so surely destroy the sustained feeling of a line of poetry as to chop it into fragments. Here the emotion as well as the thought requires fluidity of utterance. The principles of phonetics, then, the principles of voice production as discussed in the preceding chapter, the principles of metrics as discussed in Chapter 7, the principles of logical expression and the requirements of intelligibility as discussed in Chapter 2, and the requirements of deep feeling to be discussed in a later chapter, all encourage the reading of serious poetry, such as the sonnet, with a sustained, even flow of tone.

Care in pronunciation. With this background we are ready to consider more intelligently what it means to pronounce carefully. The vast majority of words have a standard pronunciation which

the reader should learn and use with confidence and ease and precision. And that lesser number of words that vary in sound according to the circumstances under which they are spoken can nevertheless be articulated clearly and unambiguously. That is, the word *government* can be pronounced as distinctly when the first *n* is omitted as when it is sounded, and *natcher* can be as distinct as *nateyour*. The important thing is to make sure that whatever sounds you make are clearly heard.

Vowel quality should be clear. First, all stressed vowels should be accurately formed, and distinct in quality. For *ū*, *ō*, and *ô*, as in *flew*, *flow*, and *flaw*, the lips should be definitely rounded. For the low vowels, *ä* and *ǣ*, the jaw should be open wide enough to admit two fingers between the teeth. Speech forced through a clenched jaw can never be distinct. There is ever present a lazy tendency to allow all vowels to drift in toward the neutral position, so that *meet*, *mate*, *mat*, *mote*, and *moot* sound very much alike. A helpful exercise is to practice each vowel separately according to the directions for tone production in the preceding chapter. Keeping the ear sharply focused on tone quality, sound each vowel four times, then pronounce with the same quality several words containing that sound, thus:

ä, ä, ä, ä, arm, far, father, palm, park
 ô, ô, ô, ô, oat, hope, grow, stone, broke

There is also a lazy tendency to allow the velum to relax and so to nasalize vowels that occur next to nasal consonants, as in *man*, *main*, *moan*. You can correct this fault by practicing words containing stopped consonants (which require a closed velum), noting the quality of the vowel, then trying to retain it in similarly formed words containing homorganic nasals. That is, pronounce *bad*, then try to retain the same vowel quality in *man*, and the same with *bayed* and *main*, *bode* and *moan*, *bead* and *mean*, *big* and *Ming*.

Consonants should be distinct. Secondly, all consonant sounds should be sharply enunciated. Fricatives should have enough friction to make them clearly audible, and stopped sounds should be definitely stopped. Many readers make final *s* and *z* so faint that they cannot be heard ten feet away. Some omit final *d* in such

words as *mind* and *found*, and weaken intervocalic *t* or *d*, in such words as *matter*, *better*, *model*, *modern*, into a mere scrape of the tongue on the palate. *William* and *million* are often perverted into *wi-yum* and *mi-yun*. Wordsworth's fine line:

The winds that will be howling at all hours

is sometimes corrupted into something like:

The wins 't 'll be howlinga tall ares.

And his line that ought to suggest the power and depth of the ocean:

Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea,

is weakened to:

Thou ast a voice ooze soun uz like a sea.

Our habitual lip-lazy articulation is quite inadequate to interpret the sparkle and color which poets have written into some of their finest passages. Notice in these lines from Tennyson's "Morte d'Arthur" how, as Professor Winchester says, "the verse climbs over rough consonants and pants in monosyllables till the summit is reached, when the broad water opens suddenly upon the sight."⁶

Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armèd heels—
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.

And notice the effect of the use of "liquid" consonants, and the avoidance of stops, in these lines from Tennyson's "Princess,"

Myriads of rivulets hurrying through the lawn,
The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees.

And see what fun Alfred Noyes has had playing with sounds in these lines from "A Song of Sherwood,"

⁶ Some Principles of Literary Criticism (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1899), p. 269.

Oberon, Oberon, rake away the gold,
 Rake away the red leaves, roll away the mould,
 Rake away the gold leaves, roll away the red,
 And wake Will Scarlet from his leafy forest bed.

And note these skilfully wrought sound effects in Chesterton's "Lepanto":

Strong gongs groaning as the guns boom far,
 Don John of Austria is going to the war,
 Stiff flags straining in the night-blasts cold
 In the gloom black-purple, in the glint old-gold,
 Torchlight crimson on the copper kettle-drums,
 Then the tuckets, then the trumpets, then the cannon, and he comes.

These passages illustrate the effective use of both "liquid" consonants (*l, r, m, n,* and *ng*) and the abrupt stopped sounds to obtain definite results. If the effects intended by the poet are to be adequately communicated to the hearers, these consonants must be accurately enunciated and sometimes lingered over. Appreciation of poetry consists, in part, of enjoyment of its sound effects.

Unfamiliar words require special care. Thirdly, special pains must be taken with unfamiliar words—unfamiliar either to the reader or to his audience. A word that is strange to you may be equally strange to your hearers, and the least you can do is to pronounce it accurately for them. They may not understand it, but they should at least have the assurance that they heard it clearly, and that their failure to understand was not due to your blurred pronunciation. The careless and incurious manner in which many students brush past an unfamiliar word is little short of astounding. They often show no interest in it, and take no responsibility for it, seeming to feel that it is just a blur of letters that no one needs to bother with. Again and again we need to be reminded of Ruskin's insistence that we must *get into the habit of looking intensely at words*, and assuring ourselves of their meaning and pronunciation. Words are the coins with which we hold commerce with others. They should ring true on the counter, bright and fresh-minted. And if we do not know their values we are not dealing honestly with our hearers.

Here is a list of words, all taken from selections in this book, that students frequently stumble or jump over. They are not too rare to

be part of your vocabulary. Take time to master them, both their meaning and pronunciation.

aerial	pumice	leviathan
covert	misanthrope	canaille
noblesse	satyr	chicanery
lethargy	medieval	impious
vagrant	latent	draught
sycophantic	homogeneous	hovering
groveling	gules	cerebral
minutiae	recluse	crotchet

Proper names also need care. To some students it never seems to have occurred that an unfamiliar name has a standard pronunciation which can be learned from a good dictionary. They seem surprised, and a little injured, if they are expected to be responsible for such words, even in a passage which presumably they have prepared for reading aloud. The names that follow will all be encountered in the selections in this book.

Termagant	Medici	Semiramis
Pleiades	Belial	Proteus
Eurydice	Pelops	Pelion
Pegasus	Hippocrene	Sinai
Mænad	Baïæ	Hymeneal
Lethe	Valois	Bellerophon
Persephone	Lacedæmonian	Hecuba
Manichee	Telemachus	Stygian

Unconventional combinations need care. Fourthly, a reader should develop a kind of sixth sense for combinations of sounds that are not likely to be readily identified by his audience—unconventional uses of words, and variations in the normal word-order. For example, if Shakespeare's line,

When I have seen by time's fell hand defaced,

is not clearly spoken, it may be heard as a mystifying remark about something that "fell handy-faced," and be quite devoid of meaning. Byron's lines about oaken ships

whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee,

contain only familiar words, but their unexpected use and inverted order may make the passage quite unintelligible if they are not clearly pronounced and correctly phrased and stressed. And such lines as these:

And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
Of onset,

Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

With jellies soother than the creamy curd,
And lucent syrups, tinct with cinnamon,

John Keats.

A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and kings,

John Keats.

Clasp'd like a missal where swart Paynims pray,

John Keats.

will hardly be understood no matter how finely enunciated.

Most discourse flows along clearly enough and will be understood if read passably well, but you will sometimes come upon combinations of sounds or words that will not be easily apprehended unless very accurately articulated. You must learn to be alert for such passages, and take special pains with them.

Articulatory prestidigitation. The meaning of this formidable title can be boiled down to *deftness of tongue*. It should be apparent from the preceding discussion that in intelligible speech the tongue must make rapid and accurate shifts from one definite position to another. The tongue is a muscle, and like other muscles it can be trained by exercise. It is doubtful whether any better exercise in pronunciation can be found than in the rapid articulation of some of the songs from the Gilbert and Sullivan operas. The catchy lines keep interest alive, the meter encourages a regular and rapid tempo, and the lines contain all the sounds and combinations of sounds on which drill is needed.

Choose one of the three passages that follow and master it for rapid articulation. It should be memorized. Begin by speaking it slowly, enunciating every sound with exaggerated distinctness. Gradually increase your tempo until you reach, or exceed, the tempo prescribed by Sullivan's music, if you know his music, *but never sacrifice distinctness to speed*. Do not at any stage lapse into

the short-cuts of ordinary conversation. See that *every syllable* receives a distinct pulse of the voice; make your utterance staccato. Do not say *inf'mation, veg'table, hypot'nuse*; give such words four full syllables, but keep the syllables in proportion. It is well to accent normally weak syllables when the meter calls for an accent on them. Do not begin the second passage with *Fire not*, instead of *If I were not*. Take *very, very* great pains to sound clear *t's* and *d's* in such words as *model, modern, letter, better, hatter, matter*. Make a clear *ũ* in *us*, and do not omit the *v* in *of*. Try to maintain clear vowels in such words as *am, at, and, for, you, not, and should*. Note that *General* is intended to rhyme with *mineral*.

In your labor to master the articulation do not neglect the *spirit* of the verses. They represent the comic spirit at its best. Enjoy them, and try to make your hearers enjoy them too.

1. I am the very model of a modern Major-general,
 I've information vegetable, animal, and mineral,
 I know the kings of England, and I quote the fights historical,
 From Marathon to Waterloo, in order categorical;
 I'm very well acquainted too with matters mathematical; 5
 I understand equations, both the simple and quadratical;
 About binomial theorem I'm teeming with a lot of news—
 With many cheerful facts about the square of the hypotenuse; . . .
 I'm very good at integral and differential calculus;
 I know the scientific names of beings animalculous; 10
 In short, in matters vegetable, animal, and mineral
 I am the very model of a modern Major-general.

The Pirates of Penzance.

2. If I were not a little mad and generally silly,
 I should give you my advice upon the subject, willy nilly;
 I should show you in a moment how to grapple with the question,
 And you'd really be astonished at the force of my suggestion.
 On the subject I shall write you a most valuable letter, 5
 Full of excellent suggestions when I feel a little better,
 But at present I'm afraid I am as mad as any hatter,
 So I'll keep 'em to myself, for my opinion doesn't matter!

Ruddigore.

3. Now is not this ridiculous—and is not this preposterous?
 A thorough-paced absurdity—explain it if you can.
 Instead of rushing eagerly to cherish us and foster us,
 They all prefer this melancholy literary man.

Instead of slyly peering at us,
 Casting looks endearing at us,
 Blushing at us, flushing at us—flirting with a fan;
 They're actually sneering at us, fleering at us, jeering at us!
 Pretty sort of treatment for a military man!

Patience.

PLAN OF STUDY

29. Practice forming your vowels clearly and accurately. Avoid the lazy tendency to neutralize them, or let them drift toward the schwa position. But avoid giving weak vowels a strong pronunciation.

30. Take pains to form consonant sounds precisely and accurately. Do not neglect final stops.

31. But observe the conventional assimilations and gradations. When in the least doubt concerning a pronunciation, consult a good dictionary, first making sure that you know what the lexicographer means by his markings.

32. Once the correct sound of every word in your selection is determined, practice the whole until you can speak it without being unduly speech-conscious, and without faltering and stumbling.

33. Aim toward a standard of pronunciation that will not attract attention to itself as being dialectic or provincial, slovenly or over-precise.

34. Determine the extent of each breath-group, and tie together the words within it. This is especially important in reading poetry.

35. In poetry make special note of beautiful sound-effects and recurrences of individual sounds (alliteration and assonance), and give such effects a little extra value in reading.

CRITERIA

28. Were vowels accurately shaped? Were legitimate gradations of quality observed in unstressed vowels?

29. Were consonants sharp and clear? Was there too much, or too little, assimilation?

30. Was the proper mean observed between overniceness and slovenly articulation?

31. Was pronunciation free from self-consciousness and affectation?

32. Did the reader approximate an acceptable standard of pronunciation?

33. Did he keep together the words that belonged together in breath-groups so that his utterance was fluid and free from choppiness?

34. If the reading was poetry, were special sound-effects capitalized so as to bring out their beauty and significance?

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Define a standard of English pronunciation.
2. What does it mean to "pronounce carefully"?
3. Discuss the relation of modern spelling to modern pronunciation.
4. What is the cause of the qualities of the different vowels?
5. What are diphthongs? Indicate the composition of each of the diphthongs.
6. Distinguish between voiced and voiceless consonants.
7. Distinguish between stops and continuants.
8. Define fricatives, nasals, glides.
9. How have historical changes altered pronunciation?
10. What are assimilations? When are they acceptable, and when not?
11. Define the regional differences in American pronunciation.
12. How should obsolete or unconventional rhymes in poetry be treated?
13. Why should breath-groups coincide with thought-groups in reading?
14. What is the reader's responsibility for unfamiliar words?

SELECTIONS FOR PRACTICE

For additional practice on pronunciation several longer songs from the Gilbert and Sullivan operas are here offered. They should be read according to the directions for the shorter passages given above. Swinburne's parody on his own poetry, "Nephelidia," is added because it affords such excellent opportunity for drill on individual consonant sounds.

THE DREAM SONG

From IOLANTHE

W. S. Gilbert

When you're lying awake with a dismal headache, and repose is
tabooed by anxiety,
I conceive you may use any language you choose to indulge in without
impropriety;
For your brain is on fire—the bedclothes conspire of usual slumber to
plunder you:
First your counterpane goes and uncovers your toes, and your sheet
slips demurely from under you;
Then the blanketing tickles—you feel like mixed pickles, so terribly
sharp is the pricking,
And you're hot and you're cross, and you tumble and toss till there's
nothing 'twixt you and the ticking;
Then your bedclothes all creep to the floor in a heap, and you pick 'em
all up in a tangle,
Next your pillow resigns and politely declines to remain at its usual
angle.
Well, you get some repose in the form of a doze, with hot eyeballs and
head ever aching,
But your slumbering teems with such horrible dreams that you'd very
much better be waking;
For you dream you are crossing the Channel, and tossing about in a
steamer from Harwich—
Which is something between a large bathing machine and a very small
second-class carriage—

And you're giving a treat (penny ice and cold meat) to a party of friends and relations—

They're a ravenous horde—and they all came on board at Sloan Square and South Kensington Stations.

And bound on that journey you find your attorney (who started that morning from Devon);

He's a bit undersized, and you don't feel surprised when he tells you he's only eleven.

Well, you're driving like mad with this singular lad (by the by, the ship's now a four-wheeler),

And you're playing round games, and he calls you bad names when you tell him that "ties pay the dealer";

But this you can't stand, so you throw up your hand, and you find you're as cold as an icicle,

In your shirt and your socks (the black silk with gold clocks), crossing Salisbury Plain on a bicycle:

And he and the crew are on bicycles too—which they've somehow or other invested in—

And he's telling the tars all the particulars of a company he's interested in—

It's a scheme of devices, to get at low prices all goods from cough mixtures to cables

(Which tickled the sailors), by treating retailers as though they were all vegetables—

You get a good spadesman to plant a small tradesman (first take off his boots with a boot-tree),

And his legs will take root, and his fingers will shoot, and they'll blossom and bud like a fruit-tree—

From the greengrocer tree you get grapes and green pea, cauliflower, pineapple, and cranberries,

While the pastrycook plant cherry brandy will grant, apple puffs, and three-corners, and Banburys—

The shares are a penny, and ever so many are taken by Rothschild and Baring,

And just as a few are allotted to you, you awake with a shudder despairing—

You're a regular wreck, with a crick in your neck; and no wonder you snore for your head's on the floor, and you're needles and pins from your soles to your shins; and your flesh is a-creep, and your left leg's asleep; and you've cramps in your toes, and a fly on your nose, and some fluff in your lung, and a feverish tongue, and a

thirst that's intense, and a general sense that you haven't been sleeping in clover;
 But the darkness has passed, and it's daylight at last, and the night has been long—ditto, ditto, my song—and thank Goodness they're both of them over!

POINT'S SONG

From THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD

W. S. Gilbert

Oh! a private buffoon is a light-hearted loon,
 If you listen to popular rumour;
 From the morn to the night he's so joyous and bright,
 And he bubbles with wit and good humour!
 He's so quaint and so terse, both in prose and in verse;
 Yet though people forgive his transgression,
 There are one or two rules that all family fools
 Must observe, if they love their profession.

There are one or two rules,
 Half a dozen, may be,
 That all family fools,
 Of whatever degree,
 Must observe, if they love their profession.

If you wish to succeed as a jester, you'll need
 To consider each person's auricular:
 What is all right for B would quite scandalise C
 (For C is so very particular);
 And D may be dull, and E's very thick skull
 Is as empty of brains as a ladle;
 While F is F sharp, and will cry with a carp
 That he's known your best joke from his cradle!

When your humour they flout,
 You can't let yourself go;
 And it *does* put you out
 When a person says, "Oh,
 I have known that old joke from my cradle!"

If your master is surly, from getting up early
 (And tempers are short in the morning),
 An inopportune joke is enough to provoke
 Him to give you, at once, a month's warning.

Then if you refrain, he is at you again,
For he likes to get value for money;
He'll ask then and there, with an insolent stare,
"If you know that you're paid to be funny?"

It adds to the tasks
Of a merryman's place
When your principal asks,
With a scowl on his face,
If you know that you're paid to be funny?

Comes a Bishop, maybe, or a solemn D.D.—
Oh, beware of his anger provoking!
Better not pull his hair—don't stick pins in his chair;
He don't understand practical joking.
If the jests that you crack have an orthodox smack,
You may get a bland smile from these sages;
But should they, by chance, be imported from France,
Half-a-crown is stopped out of your wages!

It's a general rule,
Though your zeal it may quench,
If the family fool
Tells a joke that's too French,
Half-a-crown is stopped out of his wages!

Though your head it may rack with a bilious attack,
And your senses with toothache you're losing,
Don't be mopy and flat—they don't fine you for that,
If you're properly quaint and amusing!
Though your wife ran away with a soldier that day,
And took with her your trifle of money;
Bless your heart, they don't mind—they're exceedingly kind—
They don't blame you—as long as you're funny!

It's a comfort to feel,
If your partner should flit,
Though *you* suffer a deal,
They don't mind it a bit—
They don't blame you—so long as you're funny!

BUNTHORNE'S SONG

*From PATIENCE**W. S. Gilbert*

If you're anxious for to shine in the high aesthetic line as a man of
 culture rare,
 You must get up all the germs of the transcendental terms and plant
 them everywhere.
 You must lie upon the daisies and discourse in novel phrases of your
 complicated state of mind,
 The meaning doesn't matter if it's only idle chatter of a transcendental
 kind.

And every one will say,
 As you walk your mystic way,
 "If this young man expresses himself in terms too deep for *me*,
 Why, what a very singularly deep young man this deep young man
 must be!"

Be eloquent in praise of the very dull old days which have long since
 passed away,
 And convince 'em, if you can, that the reign of good Queen Anne was
 Culture's palmiest day.
 Of course you will pooh-pooh whatever's fresh and new, and declare
 it's crude and mean,
 For Art stopped short in the cultivated court of the Empress Josephine.

And every one will say,
 As you walk your mystic way,
 "If that's not good enough for him which is good enough for *me*,
 Why, what a very cultivated kind of youth this kind of youth must be!"

Then a sentimental passion of a vegetable fashion must excite your
 languid spleen,
 An attachment *à la* Plato for a bashful young potato, or a not-too-
 French French bean!
 Though the Philistines may jostle, you will rank as an apostle in the
 high aesthetic band,
 If you walk down Piccadilly with a poppy or a lily in your mediaeval
 hand.

And every one will say,
 As you walk your flowery way,
 "If he's content with a vegetable love which would certainly not suit *me*,
 Why, what a most particularly pure young man this pure young man
 must be!"

GIUSEPPE'S SONG

*From THE GONDOLIERS**W. S. Gilbert*

Rising early in the morning,
We proceed to light the fire,
Then our Majesty adorning
In its workaday attire,
We embark without delay
On the duties of the day.

First, we polish off some batches
Of political despatches,
And foreign politicians circumvent:
Then, if business isn't heavy,
We may hold a Royal *levée*,
Or ratify some Acts of Parliament.
Then we probably review the household troops—
With the usual "Shalloo humps!" and "Shalloo hoops!"
Or receive with ceremonial and state
An interesting Eastern potentate.
After that we generally
Go and dress our private *valet*—
(It's a rather nervous duty—he's a touchy little man)—
Write some letters literary
For our private secretary—
He is shaky in his spelling, so we help him if we can.
Then, in view of cravings inner,
We go down and order dinner;
Then we polish the Regalia and the Coronation Plate—
Spend an hour in titivating
All our Gentlemen-in-Waiting;
Or we run on little errands for the Ministers of State.

Oh, philosophers may sing
Of the troubles of a King;
Yet the duties are delightful, and the privileges great;
But the privilege and pleasure
That we treasure beyond measure
Is to run on little errands for the Ministers of State.

After luncheon (making merry
On a bun and glass of sherry),

If we've nothing in particular to do,
 We may make a Proclamation,
 Or receive a deputation—
 Then we possibly create a Peer or two.

Then we help a fellow-creature on his path
 With the Garter or the Thistle or the Bath
 Or we dress and toddle off in semi-state
 To a festival, a function, or a *fête*.

Then we go and stand as sentry
 At the Palace (private entry),
 Marching hither, marching thither, up and down and to and fro,
 While the warrior on duty
 Goes in search of beer and beauty
 (And it generally happens that he hasn't far to go).
 He relieves us, if he's able,
 Just in time to lay the table,
 Then we dine and serve the coffee, and at half-past twelve or one,
 With a pleasure that's emphatic,
 We retire to our attic
 With the gratifying feeling that our duty has been done!

Oh, philosophers may sing
 Of the troubles of a King,
 But of pleasures there are many and of worries there are none;
 And the culminating pleasure
 That we treasure beyond measure
 Is the gratifying feeling that our duty has been done!

NEPHELIDIA

Algernon Charles Swinburne

From the depth of the dreamy decline of the dawn through a notable
 nimbus of nebulous moonshine,
 Pallid and pink as the palm of the flag-flower that flickers with fear
 of the flies as they float,
 Are the looks of our lovers that lustrously lean from a marvel of mystic
 miraculous moonshine,
 These that we feel in the blood of our blushes that thicken and
 threaten with throbs through the throat?
 Thicken and thrill as a theatre thronged at appeal of an actor's appalled
 agitation,

Fainter with fear of the fires of the future than pale with the promise
of pride in the past;
Flushed with the famishing fulness of fever that reddens with radiance
of rathe recreation,
Gaunt as the ghastliest of glimpses that gleam through the gloom of
the gloaming when ghosts go aghast?
Nay, for the nick of the tick of the time is a tremulous touch on the
temples of terror,
Strained as the sinews yet strenuous with strife of the dead who is
dumb as the dust-heaps of death;
Surely no soul is it, sweet as the spasm of erotic emotional exquisite
error,
Bathed in the balms of beautified bliss, beatific itself by beatitude's
breath.
Surely no spirit or sense of a soul that was soft to the spirit and soul of
our senses
Sweetens the stress of surprising suspicion that sobs in the semblance
and sound of a sigh;
Only this oracle opens Olympian, in mystical moods and triangular
tenses,—
"Life is the lust of a lamp for the light that is dark till the dawn of
the day when we die."
Mild is the mirk and monotonous music of memory, melodiously mute
as it may be,
While the hope in the heart of a hero is bruised by the breach of
men's rapiers, resigned to the rod;
Made meek as a mother whose bosom-beats bound with the bliss-bring-
ing bulk of a balm-breathing baby,
As they grope through the grave-yard of creeds, under skies growing
green at a groan for the grimness of God.
Blank is the book of his bounty beholden of old, and its binding is
blacker than bluer:
Out of blue into black is the scheme of the skies, and their dews are
the wine of the bloodshed of things:
Till the darkling desire of delight shall be free as a fawn that is freed
from the fangs that pursue her,
Till the heart-beats of hell shall be hushed by a hymn from the hunt
that has harried the kennel of kings.

Chapter 7

VERSE

SO FAR we have been primarily concerned with prose. We have purposely avoided selections from serious poetry because the reading of poetry involves two additional factors which greatly complicate the task of interpretation: first, poetry is highly imaginative and highly charged with emotion; second, it is in metrical form. In this chapter we shall consider metrical form.

Prose to verse. It is obvious that not all verse is poetry. The difference between them we need not here attempt to define beyond pointing out that it lies chiefly in the first factor just mentioned—a more intense imaginative and emotional quality, and a higher seriousness. It is important to consider the mechanical problems arising from the presence of meter, completely disentangled from the other “spiritual” aspects of poetry. We shall confine ourselves, then, in this chapter, to a consideration of light, or comic, verse.

It is evident that all the technique described in the preceding chapters is as necessary in reading verse as in reading prose. For verse is not merely sound; it contains idea, and its idea must be accurately interpreted. It follows that, as Hugh Blair said,¹ “When we are reading or reciting verse, there is a peculiar difficulty in making the pauses justly. The difficulty arises from the melody of the verse, which dictates to the ear pauses or rests of its own; and to adjust and compound these properly with the pauses of the sense, so as neither to hurt the ear, nor offend the understanding, is so very nice a matter, that it is no wonder we so seldom meet with

¹ *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (London: 1783), Lecture xxxiii.

good readers of poetry." He might have made the same statement concerning the conflict of stresses, for it is generally even more troublesome than that of pauses.

The simplest solution would be to ignore the demands of meter and read verse as if it were prose. But surely if a writer chooses to use verse rather than prose, he does so for a reason. We need to discover what that reason is. We cannot read verse with appreciation until we understand something of the function of verse.

Pleasure in rhythm. Let us note first that meter is a highly regularized form of rhythm, and that one of the chief effects of rhythm is to give pleasure. "Mary Had a Little Lamb" would be a dull story indeed if told in prose. Its charm for children consists largely in its meter, in the stanza pattern, and in the recurrence of the rhymes. Or consider this anecdote told in prose: "Henry Ward Beecher once paid a hen a compliment, which she returned by laying an egg in his hat. Thus did the hen reward Beecher." The pun is excellent, but note the heightened comedy of the versified "eggstravagance" by Oliver Wendell Holmes:

The Reverend Henry Ward Beecher
Called a hen a most elegant creature.
The hen, pleased with that,
Laid an egg in his hat,—
And thus did the hen reward Beecher.

Consider also the delight which children—and grown-ups—find in such jingles as:

Cottleston, Cottleston, Cottleston pie,
A fly can't bird, but a bird can fly;
Ask me a riddle and I reply,
Cottleston, Cottleston, Cottleston pie.

There was a time when lessons in geography, in history, in the catechism, were turned into verse to make them more palatable for children. We cannot ignore the fact that a certain pleasure inheres in rhyme and meter. Any attempt to interpret verse as prose is sure to destroy its meaning.

English metrics. In order that we may understand how to capitalize the pleasures of verse rhythm, as well as the expedients sometimes employed to avoid excessive rhythm, we must refresh our memories on the terminology of scansion.

English is an accented language, its syllables being roughly either heavy or light, as the syllables of Latin and Greek were either long or short. A heavy syllable differs from a light one in having more force, but it usually has also a higher pitch and a longer duration. Thus in the word *re-mark*, *re-* will commonly be lighter in stress, shorter in duration, and lower in pitch than the accented syllable *-mark*. When there is a regular recurrence of heavy and light syllables we have what is called meter. In words of more than one syllable, the heavy or accented syllables are easily distinguished from the unaccented. If we have any doubts about them we can find them marked for us in a dictionary. But monosyllables such as *and*, *so*, *had*, *that*, may be either light or heavy, depending upon the context, and so may cause trouble.

As an example take Stevenson's sentence "Life is not entirely carried on by literature." If we mark the heavy syllables with the usual accent mark (') and the light syllables with a breve (˘), we shall have, as most of us would read the sentence, the following:

Lífe ı́s nót ẽn-tíre-ly cár-ried ón bý lít-ẽr-ă-tũre.

Here there is no marked regularity in the alternation of accented and unaccented syllables. But in verse the recurrence is regular:

Téll mẽ nót ín mourgful númbers

Lífe ı́s búť aň émpťý dréam.

Meters are called by various names, according to whether there is one or two weak syllables between the accented syllables, and whether the weak syllables seem to belong to the accented syllable preceding them or to the one following them. When there is a regular alternation of one light and one heavy syllable, as

The sún/ı́s wárm,/the ský/ı́s cléar.

the meter is called iambic, and each heavy syllable with its preceding light syllable is called an iambic foot, or iamb. When the two kinds of syllables are reversed, the heavy one coming first, as

Háppy/fíeld őr/móssy/cávěrn

Chóicěr/thán the/Měrmáid/Távěrn.

the meter is trochaic, and the foot a trochee. It is often a mere matter of opinion whether a line is to be called trochaic or iambic; a line may begin with a strong syllable and still seem more iambic than trochaic. When *two* light syllables intervene between the heavy ones, the line is either anapestic, as

Like the dawn/of the morn,
Or the dews/of the spring.

or dactylic, as

Sisterly,/brotherly,
Fatherly,/motherly.

Substitution of one of these feet for another is common, and seldom interferes with the rhythm. A spondee, consisting of two strong syllables, as in *break-down*, may be substituted for either of the tri-syllabic feet. It should be noted that there is generally no indisputably right way to scan a line of poetry. Here are two scansions of a couplet from Shakespeare. Perhaps you can make a better one, that is, one that seems to indicate more adequately the rhythm which the poet intended.

Ō Mís/tress míne,/w hére ǎre yǒu/róamíng?
Ō stáy/ ǎnd héar!/ yǒur trúe/ lǒve's cóm/íng.
Ō Místress/ míne,/ w hére ǎre/ yǒu róam/íng?
Ō stáy ǎnd/ héar! yǒur/ trúe lǒve's/ cómíng.

Feet are often incomplete. This fact, and the readiness with which substitutions of one foot for another can be made, suggest that the foot is not very important in scansion. Rhythm consists not so much in a succession of feet as in a regular recurrence of accents. An important development of this tenet will be made in a later chapter on prose rhythm.

Poetry is divided into lines, the length of the line being measured either by the number of accents or by the number of syllables it contains. There are seldom more than six accents to the line.

Lines of similar lengths or of varying lengths are sometimes combined into stanzas. The pattern of such stanzas is generally emphasized by the recurrence of rhyme words at the ends of the lines.

The reading of verse. The first care in reading verse should be to give due attention to the rhythm. As rhythm adds to the beauty and feeling of serious poetry, so it seems to add fun to what is already comic. That is, it seems to increase the pleasure of *any* emotion. Rhyme and meter can redeem very ordinary sentiments from dullness, and give to banality the charm of novelty. In reading comic verse, then, we must make the most of the meter. In the drill selection that follows, do not miss the comic value of the skilful fitting of such words as *Dinoceras* and *Loxolophodon* into the rhythm of the line.

Rhyme also needs attention. Our pleasure in recognizing words of similar sound is well known. It is evidenced in our nursery rhymes and in the delight which children take in such senseless chants as "Johnny Jones, broke his bones." Adults find the same pleasure, a little more refined, in the distorted rhymes of the comic poet. A pleasant expectancy awaits the rounding out of a line as we wonder what absurd word he will find to complete his stanza. An excellent example is offered in the well-known limerick:

A lady there was of Antigua,
Who said to her spouse, "What a pig you are!"
He answered, "My Queen,
Is it manners you mean,
Or do you refer to my fig-u-ah?"

Double and triple rhymes, that is, those having two or three syllables, lend themselves best to comic effect, and the rhymsters have had great fun with them. *Intellectual*, for instance, has been rhymed with *hen-pecked you all*; *prophecy* with *of his eye*; and *organity* with *plan it he*.

But the regularity of accents, and the recurring clash of rhyme words, may, even in comic verse, set up a monotony that is very annoying. A continuous iteration of the same sound at regular intervals will drive one either to the point of madness or of sleep. Monotony is always either annoying or soporific, whether produced by a tom-tom, a steam riveter, or a metrical stanza. A more accurate statement of the psychology of rhythm would probably point

out that the first recognition of any pattern of rhythm is generally pleasant; if the pattern is often repeated it becomes annoying; and if it continues long it ceases to hold our attention, and may lull us into apathy or actual numbness. You may test this for yourself by sitting down for an hour with the monotonous "rocking-horse" couplets of Alexander Pope, say in his translation of the *Iliad*. Good poets have generally understood and avoided this tyranny in rhythm, and have resorted to various expedients to break it. Shakespeare and Milton in their later works almost cut themselves free from any regularity of verse. The reader of verse must constantly be on guard to check this monotony, for he can by his interpretation either accentuate or diminish the intensity of the rhythm. There is, of course, no rule or standard of rhythm. Here, as in so many other matters, virtue lies in finding the proper mean, in striking the right balance between a monotonous sing-song, and a prosy rationality which completely loses the value of the rhythm intended.

In most of the selections which follow, the lines are so short, and the rhymes so frequent, that there is little danger of obscuring the rhythm. But there is danger of sing-song, and we need to note some of the devices which may be used to break the regularity of the verse pattern. We shall illustrate from "The Little Eohippus." The rhymes group the lines into four-line stanzas, or quatrains. A marked regularity in one quatrain may not cause offense, but a succession of such quatrains will. We had better begin, then, with the first, and see whether its regularity cannot be broken. In the first, second, and fourth lines, the meter is very even; that is, metric accent coincides with sense accent. But in the third line, the two contiguous heavy syllables *five toes* call for heavy sense stress. Make the most of this opportunity by dwelling on them. Note also that this is a run-on line; that is, its thought runs on into the next line without a break. Do not, then, pause after *scampered*, and do not make much of the word, for it should be evident that *scampered* is only one of a dozen words that *might* have been used, such as *ran*, *skipped*, *frisked*, etc. The essential thought is that this animal went about on five toes during the Tertiary age. Note that *rocks* is chosen only because of its rhyme, and throw your stress on *Tertiary*. The first line may well be broken by a slight pause for suspense after *once*. Further variety can be secured by speaking the second line rapidly.

In the second quatrain, a pause before *Eohippus* will be helpful to the sense. A feeling of contrast between *thought* and *called* will help to break the rhythm, as will a speeding up and suppression of the eighth line, as if it were parenthetical. Then of course when you come to the "lumpish old *Dinoceras*" and the slow-going *Coryphodon*, your utterance will be appropriately slow and heavy. But four heavy lines in succession is too much, and you had best vary the twelfth line by speaking it rapidly, since all its thought is implied in the verb *were*. *Long ago* should be treated as one word, with a heavier accent on *-go* than on *long*.

In the next quatrain take advantage of the opportunity to dwell slightly on *I* and *horse* in line fourteen, and bear down hard on *middle finger-nails* (l. 15), since all three words are vital to the thought. There is no great thought value in line sixteen, since its meaning is implied in what has gone before. In lines seventeen and eighteen the rhythm can be reduced by stressing the *flowing tail* and *mane* at the expense of the repeated phrase *I am going to have*. In the next line it will be helpful to give *stand* some prominence, by way of contrast with *have*, though it is followed by the important words *fourteen hands high*. The sense demands some stress on *psychozoic*, as you will understand if you investigate its meaning in relation to *Tertiary*, and this will help to relieve the force of the rhyme on *plain*, which is not a word of any importance.

After three very regular lines, line twenty-four can be varied by pausing slightly after *he*. After the heavy derision of lines twenty-five and twenty-six, the two following lines may well be uttered with brusque rapidity. In the remaining portion of the poem, the richness of mood suggested should be sufficient to save the lines from monotony.

If I have seemed to overlabor the need for breaking the monotony of the verse, it is not because I would encourage the complete obliteration of rhythm, but because experience shows that with most students this selection suffers by the obscuration of the sense, and that with many it degenerates into a dreary sing-song.

In defense of comedy. And now perhaps some earnest student, after leafing through the selections at the end of this chapter, will say, "Why should we waste our time on such nonsense? This is very frivolous reading for men and women of college intelligence."

This sober puritanical spirit believes that it is hostile only to silliness and frivolity, and is quite unaware that it may be hostile also to intelligence and good sense, that the best corrective of frivolity is sometimes folly itself, that very wise and earnest men have sometimes been devoted to comedy, and that deep and profound scholars have often been lovers and even writers of nonsense verse. Four hundred years ago, the great Dutch scholar, Erasmus, wrote an "oration" *In Praise of Folly*, and in the introductory epistle addressed to Sir Thomas More pointed out that such great minds as Homer, Vergil, Ovid, Seneca, and Plutarch, had at times written lightly of light subjects. "Trifles may be a whet to more serious thoughts," he said, "and comical matters may be so treated of as that a reader of ordinary sense may possibly thence reap more advantage than from some more big and stately argument." George Meredith calls the comic "the first-born of common-sense," "the genius of thoughtful laughter."

But we need not seek a moral value in comedy. It is surely a defensible thesis that innocent fun may be enjoyed just because it is fun, and that nonsense needs no defense except that it is delightful to people of taste and intelligence. The English language is particularly fortunate in having a rich heritage of nonsense verse, and lamentable indeed is the fate of the student who fails to appreciate it. The fooleries of Swift and Thackeray, the delightful verses of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, as well as his *Hunting of the Snark*, the immortal operas and *Bab Ballads* of William Schwenck Gilbert, the parodies of Charles Calverley, and the burlesques of the two American rhymsters, father and son, Charles Edward Carryl and Guy Wetmore Carryl, should be known to every student of English literature. The love of such literature is a sign of sanity and health, and a corrective of prejudice and morbidity. A moment's reflection should show that while an idiot may utter nonsense, only an intelligent person is wise enough to distinguish at all times what is nonsense from what is sense. The best of these comic verses are works of pure intellect, unclouded by gross humor or sentimentality.

The interpretation of humor. Comic verse, and indeed humorous writing of whatever kind, is best enjoyed when shared by an appreciative reader and a sympathetic audience. Reader and audi-

ence stimulate each other, and each listener responds more freely when those around him are responding too.

But humor is often unpredictable, and comedians who are consistently successful are rare. Hence, it is not surprising that student readers have great difficulty in hitting upon the mode of presentation that makes humorous matter effective. They generally err in one of two opposite extremes. Either they deliver their comedy with a prosy rationality that indicates complete ignorance of its quality and flavor, or by an offensive type of clowning they divert the hearer's attention from the matter being read and arrogate it to themselves. What is desirable is a proper mean between these extremes.

In presenting humorous material the reader must not be passive or indifferent. There is, of course, a type of humor that is called unconscious, or straight-faced, but it is never really so; it only seems so. Almost never can a successful reader be oblivious of, or indifferent to, the comic values in what he is reading. He must be sharply aware of them—of witty turns of phrase, of unexpected or incongruous words, of absurd rhymes, of puns and exaggerations and fantastic resemblances, of irony and paradox, and all the other incongruities that constitute comedy. Note, for instance, this speech of Pooh-Bah in *The Mikado*:

I am, in point of fact, a particularly haughty and exclusive person, of pre-Adamite ancestral descent. You will understand this when I tell you that I can trace my ancestry back to a protoplasmal primordial globule. Consequently, my family pride is something inconceivable. I can't help it. I was born sneering.

Such statements must not be passed over casually, as if they were the ordinary matter-of-fact stuff of sober discourse. The reader must be aware of these absurdities, show that he is aware of them, and make his audience aware of them by "pointing them up" and giving them a special significance.

How is this to be done? It would be helpful if there were a specific formula for the expression of humor—one that could be learned and practiced—but there is none. It is true that attempts have been made to describe the proper method of representing humor, but they have not been very successful. James Burgh, for instance, wrote in the eighteenth century in *The Art of Speaking*:

Raillery, in sport, without real animosity, puts on the aspect of cheerfulness. The tone of the voice is sprightly. With contempt or disgust, it casts a look askint, from time to time, to the object; and quits the cheerful aspect for one mixed between an affected grin and sourness. The upper lip is drawn up with an air of disdain. The arms are set a-kimbo on the hips; and the right hand now and then thrown out toward the object, as if one were going to strike another a slight back-handed blow. The pitch of the voice rather low, the tone arch and sneering; the sentences short; the expression satirical, with mock-praise intermixed.

This is not very helpful, though the descriptions are valid. And other attempts have been little more helpful. Our only recourse is to depend upon the sharpness of our appreciation of humor, and our natural responsiveness of body and voice. And though comedians are born, not made, it is none the less true that every normal intelligent person has something of the comedian in him and responds in some way to what he really feels is humorous, and his responses are apparent to others. The essential thing is that his perceptions be sharp and clear.

A special difficulty arises in reading such verses as those of Lewis Carroll, because the narrative seems so obvious and casual, so "childlike and bland." Students not far removed from childhood, and those accustomed to reading to children, are prone to accept such extravagances at face value, for to a child, there is nothing incongruous in oysters walking, or walruses talking with carpenters, or Father William balancing an eel on the end of his nose. The result is that such stories are often read with naïve innocence of the comic values that mature minds find in them. That is, the reading is on the kindergarten level, rather than the university level. A mature reader will be keenly alert to what is grotesque, farcical, and fantastic in these little masterpieces of comedy, and will communicate his appreciation of it to his audience.

Avoiding excesses. But though an interpreter should reflect the mood and spirit of the author and his characters, he must maintain the reserves dictated by refined taste. Expression need never be "laid on with a trowel." The artificial smirks and grimaces often employed generally indicate only that the reader is trying desperately to be funny, and that he has forgotten who is responsible for the comedy he is presenting. There is a strong temptation for a reader of comic writing to identify himself with the author, or his

characters—to assume, more or less unconsciously, that he, and not the author, is furnishing the wit and cleverness. Instead of merely reporting the humor, he puts himself forward as the comedian and invites applause for himself. He plays the clown, instead of serving merely as the interpreter of another's humor. That, said Hamlet, is villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that does it. Pray you, avoid it.

This overplaying is likely to occur especially in reading speeches uttered by the characters in a story. In the selections offered for reading at the end of this chapter, the characters should not be impersonated as if one were acting a part in a play. Such dramatizing is sure to seem ostentatious and artificial. It offends the judicious listener because it diverts attention from the text and transfers it to the performer, and because it forces upon the listener a conception of the characters that might better be left to his own imagination. While the reader should represent sympathetically the emotions of the Little Eohippus, the Loxolophodon, and the Coryphodon (of course they will have to be *human*, not *animal* emotions), he should maintain the integrity of his own personality. He should be constantly aware, and make his hearers aware, that he is not an actor but a narrator, a reporter. This doesn't imply that he should not himself enjoy the comedy, and let his hearers know that he enjoys it. His manner may say to them, "I like this," or "Isn't this choice?" Indeed he might well say such things aloud, for they would help to maintain his identity as merely an interpreter of someone else's writing. This distinction between a lively sympathetic *interpretation* on the one hand, and *impersonation* or *clowning* on the other, is, alas, one that only the more intelligent students can observe, but it is vitally important in the proper reading of comedy.

In summary, the response desired from your audience is not admiration of the reader, but delight in what is read. It is not an uproarious guffaw, but rather a highly civilized smile, or at most what Meredith called "thoughtful laughter."

PLAN OF STUDY

36. Do not let the rhythm of the verse blind you to its content. Begin your study by a careful paraphrase of the thought of your selection. Note where pause and emphasis dictated by the verse conflict with those dictated by the sense.

37. Be sure that you understand the prevailing scheme of meter and rhyme and give them their proper value in reading.

38. If the rhythm is very strong (as is usual in comic verse), where can you break its regularity by pauses, by substituting one foot for another, by changes of tempo, by varying the weight of accented syllables, by dwelling on important syllables, etc.?

39. Try to capitalize odd rhymes, and the fitting of odd words or long words into the rhyme or meter.

40. Don't try to point a moral in such verse as is given here for practice. Cultivate a pure delight in the meter, rhyme, and comedy of the selection. Satire and ridicule need not be ugly; they may be quite delightful, even to the victim.

41. Try to decide whether it seems best to read a given selection with mock solemnity, or frankly share its fun with your hearers, or try to maintain both attitudes.

42. Many innocent-seeming verses are not innocent at all, and you will need all your wits to discover their wit and communicate it to others.

43. Avoid self-exploitation. Don't play the clown. Direct your hearers' attention to the verse, not to yourself.

CRITERIA

35. Did the thought of the selection dominate the rhythm?

36. Did the reader find the happy mean between sing-song and prose?

37. Did he capitalize all obvious opportunities to break the monotony of the rhythm?

38. Did he taste the full flavor of the comedy in rhyme, rhythm, and idea?

39. Did he achieve the appropriate comic mood, or was he too serious, too frivolous, too acid, too colorless, too extravagant?

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Distinguish between poetry and mere verse.
2. Discuss the psychological effects of rhythm.
3. Define meter, accent, rhyme, rhythm.
4. By what means may a reader mitigate a too regular verse rhythm?
5. What is the relation of intelligence to the appreciation of comedy?
6. How is comic appreciation communicated in reading aloud?
7. Should a reader of comic material identify himself with the author?

SELECTION FOR DRILL

THE LITTLE EOHIPPUS

From SIMILAR CASES *

Charlotte Perkins Gilman

There was once a little animal,
No bigger than a fox,
And on five toes he scampered
Over Tertiary rocks.
They called him Eohippus,
And they called him very small,
And they thought him of no value—
When they thought of him at all;
For the lumpish old Dinoceras
And Coryphodon so slow
Were the heavy aristocracy
In days of long ago.

Said the little Eohippus,
"I am going to be a horse!
And on my middle finger-nails
To run my earthly course;
I am going to have a flowing tail;
I'm going to have a mane!
I'm going to stand fourteen hands high
On the psychozoic plain!"

The Coryphodon was horrified,
The Dinoceras was shocked;
And they chased young Eohippus,
But he skipped away and mocked.
And they laughed enormous laughter,
And they groaned enormous groans,
And they bade young Eohippus
Go view his father's bones.

* This and the two following selections are reprinted from *In This Our World*, by permission of the author.

Said they, "You always were as small
 And mean as now we see, 30
 And that's conclusive evidence
 That you're always going to be."
 "What! Be a great, tall, handsome beast,
 With hoofs to gallop on?
 Why! You'd have to change your nature!" 35
 Said the Loxolophodon.
 They considered him disposed of,
 And retired with gait serene;
 That was the way they argued
 In "the early Eocene." 40

SUGGESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS: Make sure that you can define and pronounce *Tertiary*, *Eohippus*, *Dinoceras*, *fourteen hands high*, *psychozoic*, *Loxolophodon*, *Eocene*, and that you can pronounce *bade* and *hoofs*. To understand the meaning of this selection you will need more information about the *Eohippus* than can be got from a dictionary. Consult an encyclopaedia. Until you understand his place in the evolution of the horse you cannot understand the reference to "five toes" and "middle finger-nails." There is excellent opportunity for change of attitude in the speeches of the various animals. The author's obvious intention in this selection is to prove that human nature can be changed, but don't overwork the point. The language suggests a children's story, but you can easily assume too juvenile an attitude. And do not be too serious. *Mock* seriousness is what is wanted.

SELECTIONS FOR PRACTICE

THE ANTHROPOIDAL APE

From SIMILAR CASES

Charlotte Perkins Gilman

There was once an Anthropoidal Ape,
 Far smarter than the rest,
 And everything that they could do
 He always did the best;
 So they naturally disliked him,
 And they gave him shoulders cool,
 And when they had to mention him
 They said he was a fool.

READING ALOUD

Cried this pretentious Ape one day,
 "I'm going to be a Man!
 And stand upright, and hunt, and fight,
 And conquer all I can!
 I'm going to cut down forest trees,
 To make my houses higher!
 I'm going to kill the Mastodon!
 I'm going to make a fire!"

Loud screamed the Anthropoidal Apes
 With laughter wild and gay;
 They tried to catch that boastful one,
 But he always got away.
 So they yelled at him in chorus,
 Which he minded not a whit;
 And they pelted him with coconuts,
 Which didn't seem to hit.
 And then they gave him reasons
 Which they thought of much avail,
 To prove how his preposterous
 Attempt was sure to fail.
 Said the sages, "In the first place,
 The thing cannot be done!
 And, second, if it could be,
 It would not be any fun!
 And, third, and most conclusive,
 And admitting no reply,
 You would have to change your nature!
 We should like to see you try!"
 They chuckled then triumphantly,
 These lean and hairy shapes,
 For these things passed as arguments
 With the Anthropoidal Apes.

THE NEOLITHIC MAN

From SIMILAR CASES

Charlotte Perkins Gilman

There was once a Neolithic Man,
 An enterprising wight,
 Who made his chopping implements
 Unusually bright.

Unusually clever he,
Unusually brave,
And he drew delightful Mammoths
On the borders of his cave.
To his Neolithic neighbors,
Who were startled and surprised,
Said he, "My friends, in course of time,
We shall be civilized!
We are going to live in cities!
We are going to fight in wars!
We are going to eat three times a day
Without the natural cause!
We are going to turn life upside down
About a thing called gold!
We are going to want the earth, and take
As much as we can hold!
We are going to wear great piles of stuff
Outside our proper skins!
We are going to have diseases!
And Accomplishments!! And Sins!!!"

Then they all rose up in fury
Against their boastful friend,
For prehistoric patience
Cometh quickly to an end.
Said one, "This is chimerical!
Utopian! Absurd!"
Said another, "What a stupid life!
Too dull, upon my word!"
Cried all, "Before such things can come,
You idiotic child,
You must alter Human Nature!"
And they all sat back and smiled.
Thought they, "An answer to that last
It will be hard to find!"
It was a clinching argument
To the Neolithic Mind!

THE BAKER'S TALE

*From THE HUNTING OF THE SNARK**Lewis Carroll*

They roused him with muffins—they roused him with ice—
They roused him with mustard and cress—
They roused him with jam and judicious advice—
They set him conundrums to guess.

When at length he sat up and was able to speak,
His sad story he offered to tell;
And the Bellman cried "Silence! Not even a shriek!"
And excitedly tingled his bell.

There was silence supreme! Not a shriek, not a scream,
Scarcely even a howl or a groan,
As the man they called "Ho!" told his story of woe
In an antediluvian tone.

"My father and mother were honest, though poor—"
"Skip all that!" cried the Bellman in haste.
"If it once becomes dark, there's no chance of a Snark—
We have hardly a minute to waste!"

"I skip forty years," said the Baker, in tears,
"And proceed without further remark
To the day when you took me aboard of your ship
To help you in hunting the Snark.

"A dear uncle of mine (after whom I was named)
Remarked when I bade him farewell—"
"Oh, skip your dear uncle!" the Bellman exclaimed,
As he angrily tingled his bell.

"He remarked to me then," said that mildest of men,—
"If your Snark be a Snark that is right,
Fetch it home by all means—you may serve it with greens,
And it's handy for striking a light.

"You may seek it with thimbles—and seek it with care;
You may hunt it with forks and hope;
You may threaten its life with a railway share;
You may charm it with smiles and soap—'"

("That's exactly the method," the Bellman bold
 In a hasty parenthesis cried:—
 "That's exactly the way I have always been told
 That the capture of Snarks should be tried!")

"But oh, beamish nephew! beware of the day
 If your Snark be a Boojum! For then
 You will softly and suddenly vanish away,
 And never be met with again!"

"It is this, it is this that oppresses my soul
 When I think of my uncle's last words;
 And my heart is like nothing so much as a bowl
 Brimming over with quivering curds!"

"It is this, it is this"—"We have had that before!"
 The Bellman indignantly said.
 And the Baker replied: "Let me say it once more;
 It is this, it is this that I dread!"

"I engage with the Snark—every night after dark—
 In a dreamy delirious fight;
 I serve it with greens in those shadowy scenes,
 And I use it for striking a light:

"But if ever I meet with a Boojum, that day,
 In a moment (of this I am sure),
 I shall softly and silently vanish away—
 And the notion I cannot endure!"

CALIFORNIA DISSONANCE *

James Rorty

There is a peewee bird that cries
 "La, sol, me,
 La, sol, me."
 He is the only thing that sighs
 Beside the western sea.

The blue jays chatter "Tcha! Tcha! Tcha!"
 And cheer for California.
 The real estate men chortle "Whee!"
 And toot the loud calliope.

* From *Children of the Sun and Other Poems*, by permission of The Macmillan Co.

The sky is blue, the land is glad—
 The peewee bird alone is sad
 And sings in minor key,
 "La, sol, me,
 La, sol, me."
 He is the only thing that sighs
 Beside the western sea.

It was a shock, I own, to see
 Sedition sitting in a tree,
 Remarking plainly, "La, sol, me,
 La, sol, me,
 La, sol, me."
 The peewee bird is very wrong
 To voice such sentiments in song
 Beside the western sea.

I said: "My bird, you ought to know
 Enough to sing 'Do, me, sol, do,'
 In major thirds, you see, for so
 You'll help to make the country grow.

"You'll make the country grow, my dear—
 So lift your little bill and cheer,
 'Do, me, sol, do,
 Do, me, sol, do.'
 You can't be singing 'la, sol, me,'
 We simply must have harmony."

I think the bird could not have heard—
 He chanted still, I give my word,
 "La, sol, me,
 La, sol, me."
 And gloomed in obstinate dissent
 From healthy public sentiment.

And yet I cannot help but hope.
 The peewee bird will cease to mope;
 For surely he will feel in time
 The influence of the sunny clime;
 Ah, yes, the peewee bird will soon
 Be thinking lovely thoughts in tune;
 The warnings of right-thinking men
 Will bring him to himself again.

Converted, he will win to grace
And lift to God a shining face;
And he will be no longer sad
But so obstreperously glad
That he will sing from morn to night
Unbroken paeans of delight:
"Do, me, sol, do,
Do, me, sol, do."
Which helps to make the country grow.

HOW JACK FOUND THAT BEANS MAY GO BACK ON A CHAP

Guy Wetmore Carryl

Without the slightest basis
For hypochondriasis,
A widow had forebodings which a cloud around her flung,
And with expression cynical
For half the day a clinical
Thermometer she held beneath her tongue.

Whene'er she read the papers
She suffered from the vapors,
At every tale of malady or accident she'd groan;
In every new and smart disease,
From housemaid's knee to heart disease,
She recognized the symptoms as her own!

She had a yearning chronic
To try each novel tonic,
Elixir, panacea, lotion, opiate, and balm;
And from a homeopathist
Would change to an hydropathist,
And back again, with stupefying calm!

She was nervous, cataleptic,
And anemic, and dyspeptic:
Though not convinced of apoplexy, yet she had her fears.
She dwelt with force fanatical,
Upon a twinge rheumatical,
And said she had a buzzing in her ears!

Now all of this bemoaning
 And this grumbling and this groaning
 The mind of Jack, her son and heir, unconscionably bored.
 His heart completely hardening,
 He gave his time to gardening,
 For raising beans was something he adored.

Each hour in accents morbid
 This limp maternal bore bid
 Her callous son affectionate and lachrymose good-bys.
 She never granted Jack a day
 Without some long "Alackaday!"
 Accompanied by rolling of the eyes.

But Jack, no panic showing,
 Just watched his beanstalk growing,
 And twined with tender fingers the tendrils up the pole.
 At all her words funereal
 He smiled a smile ethereal,
 Or sighed an absent-minded "Bless my soul!"

That hollow-hearted creature
 Would never change a feature:
 No tear bedimmed his eye, however touching was her talk.
 She never fussed or flurried him,
 The only thing that worried him
 Was when no bean-pods grew upon the stalk!

But then he wobbled loosely
 His head, and wept profusely,
 And, taking out his handkerchief to mop away his tears,
 Exclaimed: "It hasn't got any!"
 He found this blow to botany
 Was sadder than were all his mother's fears.

The Moral is that gardeners pine
 Whene'er no pods adorn the vine.
 Of all sad words experience gleans
 The saddest are "It might have beans."
 (I did not make this up myself:
 'Twas in a book upon my shelf.
 It's witty, but I don't deny
 It's rather Whittier than I.)

THE SYCOPHANTIC FOX AND THE GULLIBLE RAVEN

Guy Wetmore Carryl

A raven sat upon a tree,
And not a word he spoke, for
His beak contained a piece of Brie,
Or, maybe it was Roquefort.
We'll make it any kind you please—
At all events it was a cheese.

Beneath the tree's umbrageous limb
A hungry fox sat smiling;
He saw the raven watching him,
And spoke in words beguiling:
"J'admire," said he, "ton beau plumage,"
(The which was simply persiflage).

Two things there are, no doubt you know,
To which a fox is used:
A rooster that is bound to crow,
A crow that's bound to roost;
And whichever he espies
He tells the most unblushing lies.

"Sweet fowl," he said, "I understand
You're more than merely natty,
I hear you sing to beat the band
And Adelina Patti.
Pray render with your liquid tongue
A bit from 'Götterdämmerung.'"

This subtle speech was aimed to please
The crow, and it succeeded;
He thought no bird in all the trees
Could sing as well as he did.
In flattery completely doused,
He gave the "Jewel Song" from "Faust."

But gravitation's law, of course,
As Isaac Newton showed it,
Exerted on the cheese its force,
And elsewhere soon bestowed it.
In fact, there is no need to tell
What happened when to earth it fell.

READING ALOUD

I blush to add that when the bird
 Took in the situation
 He said one brief, emphatic word,
 Unfit for publication.
 The fox was greatly startled, but
 He only sighed and answered "Tut."

The Moral is: A fox is bound
 To be a shameless sinner.
 And also: When the cheese comes round
 You know it's after dinner.
 But (what is only known to few)
 The fox is after dinner, too.

THE YARN OF THE NANCY BELL

W. S. Gilbert

'Twas on the shores that round our coast
 From Deal to Ramsgate span,
 That I found alone on a piece of stone
 An elderly naval man.

His hair was weedy, his beard was long,
 And weedy and long was he;
 And I heard this wight on the shore recite,
 In a singular minor key:—

"Oh, I am a cook, and a captain bold,
 And the mate of the Nancy brig,
 And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
 And the crew of the captain's gig."

And he shook his fists and he tore his hair,
 Till I really felt afraid,
 For I couldn't help thinking the man had been drinking,
 And so I simply said:

"O elderly man, it's little I know
 Of the duties of men of the sea,
 And I'll eat my hand if I understand
 However you can be

"At once a cook, and a captain bold,
And the mate of the Nancy brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig."

And he gave a hitch to his trousers, which
Is a trick all seamen larn,
And having got rid of a thumping quid,
He spun his painful yarn:—

"'Twas in the good ship Nancy Bell
That we sailed to the Indian Sea,
And there on a reef we come to grief,
Which has often occurred to me.

"And pretty nigh all the crew was drowned
(There was seventy-seven o' soul),
And only ten of the Nancy's men
Said 'Here!' to the muster-roll.

"There was me and the cook and the captain bold,
And the mate of the Nancy brig,
And the bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig.

"For a month we'd neither wittles nor drink,
Till a-hungry we did feel;
So we drewed a lot, and accordin', shot
The captain for our meal.

"The next lot fell to the Nancy's mate,
And a delicate dish he made;
Then our appetite with the midshipmite
We seven survivors stayed.

"And then we murdered the bo'sun tight,
And he much resembled pig;
Then we wittled free, did the cook and me,
On the crew of the captain's gig.

"Then only the cook and me was left,
And the delicate question, 'Which
Of us two goes to the kettle?' arose,
And we argued it out as sich.

"For I loved that cook as a brother, I did,
 And the cook he worshiped me;
 But we'd both be blowed if we'd either be stowed
 In the other chap's hold, you see.

" 'I'll be eat if you dines off me,' says Tom;
 'Yes, that,' says I, 'you'll be:
 I'm boiled if I die, my friend,' quoth I;
 And 'Exactly so,' quoth he.

"Says he, 'Dear James, to murder me
 Were a foolish thing to do,
 For don't you see that you can't cook *me*,
 While I can—and will—cook *you*?'

"So he boils the water, and takes the salt
 And the pepper in portions true
 (Which he never forgot), and some chopped shalot,
 And some sage and parsley too.

" 'Come here,' says he, with a proper pride,
 Which his smiling features tell;
 ' 'Twill soothing be if I let you see
 How extremely nice you'll smell.'

"And he stirred it round and round and round,
 And he sniffed at the foaming froth;
 When I ups with his heels, and smothers his squeals
 In the scum of the boiling broth.

"And I eat that cook in a week or less,
 And—as I eating be
 The last of his chops, why, I almost drops,
 For a wessel in sight I see!

.

"And I never larf, and I never smile,
 And I never lark nor play,
 But sit and croak, and a single joke
 I have—which is to say:—

" 'Oh, I am a cook, and a captain bold,
 And the mate of the Nancy brig,
 And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
 And the crew of the captain's gig!'"

FATHER WILLIAM

Lewis Carroll

"You are old, Father William," the young man said,
"And your hair has become very white;
And yet you incessantly stand on your head—
Do you think, at your age, it is right?"

"In my youth," Father William replied to his son,
"I feared it might injure the brain;
But, now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,
Why, I do it again and again."

"You are old," said the youth, "as I mentioned before,
And have grown most uncommonly fat;
Yet you turned a back-somersault in at the door—
Pray, what is the reason of that?"

"In my youth," said the sage, as he shook his grey locks,
"I kept all my limbs very supple
By the use of this ointment—one shilling the box—
Allow me to sell you a couple?"

"You are old," said the youth, "and your jaws are too weak
For anything tougher than suet;
Yet you finished the goose, with the bones and the beak—
Pray, how did you manage to do it?"

"In my youth," said his father, "I took to the law,
And argued each case with my wife;
And the muscular strength which it gave to my jaw
Has lasted the rest of my life."

"You are old," said the youth, "one would hardly suppose
That your eye was as steady as ever;
Yet you balanced an eel on the end of your nose—
What made you so awfully clever?"

"I have answered three questions, and that is enough,"
Said his father. "Don't give yourself airs!
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?
Be off, or I'll kick you down-stairs!"

THE WALRUS AND THE CARPENTER

Lewis Carroll

The sun was shining on the sea,
Shining with all his might:
He did his very best to make
The billows smooth and bright—
And this was odd, because it was
The middle of the night.

The moon was shining sulkily,
Because she thought the sun
Had got no business to be there
After the day was done—
"It's very rude of him," she said,
"To come and spoil the fun!"

The sea was wet as wet could be,
The sands were dry as dry.
You could not see a cloud, because
No cloud was in the sky:
No birds were flying overhead—
There were no birds to fly.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Were walking close at hand:
They wept like anything to see
Such quantities of sand:
"If this were only cleared away,"
They said, "it *would* be grand!"

"If seven maids with seven mops
Swept it for half a year,
Do you suppose," the Walrus said,
"That they could get it clear?"
"I doubt it," said the Carpenter,
And shed a bitter tear.

"O Oysters, come and walk with us!"
The Walrus did beseech.
"A pleasant walk, a pleasant talk,
Along the briny beach:

We cannot do with more than four,
To give a hand to each."

The eldest Oyster looked at him,
But never a word he said:
The eldest Oyster winked his eye,
And shook his heavy head—
Meaning to say he did not choose
To leave the oyster-bed.

But four young Oysters hurried up,
All eager for the treat:
Their coats were brushed, their faces washed,
Their shoes were clean and neat—
And this was odd, because, you know,
They hadn't any feet.

Four other Oysters followed them,
And yet another four;
And thick and fast they came at last,
And more, and more, and more—
All hopping through the frothy waves,
And scrambling to the shore.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Walked on a mile or so,
And then they rested on a rock
Conveniently low:
And all the little Oysters stood
And waited in a row.

"The time has come," the Walrus said,
"To talk of many things:
Of shoes—and ships—and sealing-wax—
Of cabbages—and kings—
And why the sea is boiling hot—
And whether pigs have wings."

"But wait a bit," the Oysters cried,
"Before we have our chat;
For some of us are out of breath,
And all of us are fat!"
"No hurry!" said the Carpenter.
They thanked him much for that.

READING ALOUD

"A loaf of bread," the Walrus said,
"Is what we chiefly need:
Pepper and vinegar besides
Are very good indeed—
Now, if you're ready, Oysters dear,
We can begin to feed."

"But not on us!" the Oysters cried,
Turning a little blue.
"After such kindness, that would be
A dismal thing to do!"
"The night is fine," the Walrus said.
"Do you admire the view?"

"It was so kind of you to come!
And you are very nice!"
The Carpenter said nothing but
"Cut us another slice:
I wish you were not quite so deaf—
I've had to ask you twice!"

"It seems a shame," the Walrus said,
"To play them such a trick,
After we've brought them out so far,
And made them trot so quick!"
The Carpenter said nothing but
"The butter's spread too thick!"

"I weep for you," the Walrus said:
"I deeply sympathize."
With sobs and tears he sorted out
Those of the largest size,
Holding his pocket-handkerchief
Before his streaming eyes.

"O Oysters," said the Carpenter,
"You've had a pleasant run!
Shall we be trotting home again?"
But answer came there none—
And this was scarcely odd, because
They'd eaten every one.

THE STORY OF PRINCE AGIB

W. S. Gilbert

Strike the concertina's melancholy string!
Blow the spirit-stirring harp like anything!

Let the piano's martial blast
Rouse the echoes of the past,
For of AGIB, Prince of Tartary, I sing!

Of AGIB, who, amid Tartaric scenes,
Wrote a lot of ballet-music in his teens:
His gentle spirit rolls
In the melody of souls—
Which is pretty, but I don't know what it means.

Of AGIB, who could readily, at sight,
Strum a march upon the loud Theodolite.
He would diligently play
On the Zoetrope all day,
And blow the gay Pantechnicon all night.

One winter—I am shaky in my dates—
Came two starving Tartar minstrels to his gates;
Oh, Allah be obeyed,
How infernally they played!
I remember that they called themselves the "Oüaits."

Oh! that day of sorrow, misery, and rage,
I shall carry to the Catacombs of Age,
Photographically lined
On the tablet of my mind,
When a yesterday has faded from its page!

Alas! PRINCE AGIB went and asked them in;
Gave them beer, and eggs, and sweets, and scent, and tin;
And when (as snobs would say)
They had "put it all away,"
He requested them to tune up and begin.

Though its icy horror chill you to the core,
I will tell you what I never told before—
The consequences true
Of that awful interview,
For I listened at the keyhole in the door!

READING ALOUD

They played him a sonata—let me see!
 “Medulla oblongata”—key of G.
 Then they began to sing
 That extremely lovely thing,
 “Scherzando! ma non troppo, ppp.”

He gave them money, more than they could count,
 Scent from a most ingenious little fount,
 More beer in little kegs,
 Many dozen hard-boiled eggs,
 And goodies to a fabulous amount.

Now follows the dim horror of my tale,
 And I feel I’m growing gradually pale;
 For even at this day,
 Though its sting has passed away,
 When I venture to remember it, I quail!

The elder of the brothers gave a squeal,
 All-overish it made me for to feel.
 “O Prince,” he says, says he,
 “*If a Prince indeed you be,*
 I’ve a mystery I’m going to reveal!

“Oh, listen, if you’d shun a horrid death,
 To what the gent who’s speaking to you saith:
 No ‘Oüaits’ in truth are we,
 As you fancy that we be,
 For (ter-remble!) I am ALECK—this is BETH!”

Said AGIB, “Oh! accursed of your kind,
 I have heard that ye are men of evil mind!”
 BETH gave a dreadful shriek—
 But before he’d time to speak
 I was mercilessly collared from behind.

In number ten or twelve, or even more,
 They fastened me, full length, upon the floor.
 On my face extended flat,
 I was walloped with a cat,
 For listening at the keyhole of a door.

Oh! the horror of that agonising thrill!
 (I can feel the place in frosty weather still.)

For a week from ten to four
I was fastened to the floor,
While a mercenary wopped me with a will!

They branded me and broke me on a wheel,
And they left me in an hospital to heal;
And, upon my solemn word,
I have never, never heard
What those Tartars had determined to reveal.

But that day of sorrow, misery, and rage,
I shall carry to the Catacombs of Age,
Photographically lined
On the tablet of my mind,
When a yesterday has faded from its page!

LOVERS, AND A REFLECTION

Charles Stuart Calverley

In moss-prankt dells which the sunbeams flatter
(And heaven it knoweth what that may mean;
Meaning, however, is no great matter)
Where woods are a-tremble with words a-tween;

Thro' God's own heather we wonned together,
I and my Willie (O love my love):
I need hardly remark it was glorious weather,
And flitter-bats wavered alow, above:

Boats were curtseying, rising, bowing,
(Boats in that climate are so polite,)
And sands were a ribbon of green endowing,
And O the sun-dazzle on bark and bight!

Thro' the rare red heather we danced together
(O love my Willie,) and smelt for flowers:
I must mention again it was glorious weather,
Rhymes are so scarce in this world of ours:

By rises that flushed with their purple favors,
Thro' becks that brattled o'er grasses sheen,
We walked or waded, we two young shavers,
Thanking our stars we were both so green.

We journeyed in parallels, I and Willie,
 In fortunate parallels! Butterflies,
 Hid in weltering shadows of daffodilly
 Or marjoram, kept making peacock eyes:

Song-birds darted about, some inky
 As coal, some snowy (I ween) as curds;
 Or rosy as pinks, or as roses pinky—
 They reck of no eerie To-come, those birds!

But they skim over bents which the mill-stream washes,
 Or hang in the lift 'neath a white cloud's hem;
 They need no parasols, no goloshes;
 And good Mrs. Trimmer she feedeth them.

Then we thrif God's cowslips (as erst his heather),
 That endowed the wan grass with their golden blooms;
 And snapt—(it was perfectly charming weather)—
 Our fingers at Fate and her goddess-blooms:

And Willie 'gan sing—(Oh, his notes were fluty;
 Wafts fluttered them out to the white-winged sea)—
 Something made up of rhymes that have done much duty,
 Rhymes (better to put it) of "ancientry":

Bowers of flowers encountered showers
 In William's carol—(O love my Willie!)
 Then he bade sorrow borrow from blithe to-morrow
 I quite forget what—say a daffodilly.

A nest in a hollow, "with buds to follow,"
 I think occurred next in his nimble strain;
 And clay that was "kneaden" of course in Eden—
 A rhyme most novel I do maintain:

Mists, bones, the singer himself, love-stories,
 And all least furlable things got furled;
 Not with any design to conceal their glories,
 But simply and solely to rhyme with world.

O if billows and pillows and hours and flowers,
 And all the brave rhymes of an elder day,
 Could be furled together, this genial weather,
 And carted or carried on wafts away,
 Nor ever again trotted out—ah me!
 How much fewer volumes of verse there'd be.

PLAIN LANGUAGE FROM TRUTHFUL JAMES *

TABLE MOUNTAIN, 1870

Bret Harte

Which I wish to remark—
And my language is plain—
That for ways that are dark,
And for tricks that are vain,
The heathen Chinee is peculiar,
Which the same I would rise to explain.

Ah Sin was his name;
And I will not deny
In regard to the same
What that name might imply;
But his smile it was pensive and childlike,
As I frequent remarked to Bill Nye.

It was August the third;
And quite soft was the skies:
Which it might be inferred
That Ah Sin was likewise;
Yet he played it that day upon William
And me in a way I despise.

Which we had a small game,
And Ah Sin took a hand.
It was Euchre. The same
He did not understand;
But he smiled as he sat by the table,
With a smile that was childlike and bland.

Yet the cards they were stocked
In a way that I grieve,
And my feelings were shocked
At the state of Nye's sleeve:
Which was stuffed full of aces and bowers,
And the same with intent to deceive.

But the hands that were played
By that heathen Chinee,

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And the points that he made,
 Were quite frightful to see—
 Till at last he put down a right bower,
 Which the same Nye had dealt unto me.

Then I looked up at Nye,
 And he gazed upon me;
 And he rose with a sigh,
 And said, "Can this be?
 We are ruined by Chinese cheap labour—"
 And he went for that heathen Chinee.

In the scene that ensued
 I did not take a hand;
 But the floor it was strewed
 Like the leaves on the strand
 With the cards that Ah Sin had been hiding,
 In the game "he did not understand."

In his sleeves, which were long,
 He had twenty-four packs—
 Which was coming it strong,
 Yet I state but the facts;
 And we found on his nails, which were taper,
 What is frequent in tapers—that's wax.

Which is why I remark,
 And my language is plain,
 That for ways that are dark,
 And for tricks that are vain,
 The heathen Chinee is peculiar—
 Which the same I am free to maintain.

HOW A CAT WAS ANNOYED AND A POET WAS BOOTED *

Guy Wetmore Carryl

A poet had a cat.
 There was nothing odd in that—
 (I *might* make a little pun about the *Mews*!)
 But what is really more
 Remarkable, she wore
 A pair of pointed patent-leather shoes.

* From *Fables for the Frivolous*, by permission of Harper & Bros.

And I doubt me greatly whether
 You have heard the like of that:
 Pointed shoes of patent-leather
 On a cat!

His time he used to pass
 Writing sonnets, on the grass—
 (I *might* say something good on *pen* and *sword*!)
 While the cat sat near at hand,
 Trying hard to understand
 The poems he occasionally roared.
 (I myself possess a feline,
 But when poetry I roar
 He is sure to make a bee-line
 For the door.)

The poet, cent by cent,
 All his patrimony spent—
 (I *might* tell how he went from *verse* to *worse*!)
 Till the cat was sure she could,
 By advising, do him good.
 So addressed him in a manner that was terse:
 "We are bound toward the scuppers,
 And the time has come to act,
 Or we'll both be on our uppers
 For a fact!"

On her boot she fixed her eye,
 But the boot made no reply—
 (I *might* say: "Couldn't speak to save its *sole*!")
 And the foolish bard, instead
 Of responding, only read
 A verse that wasn't bad upon the whole.
 And it pleased the cat so greatly,
 Though she knew not what it meant,
 That I'll quote approximately
 How it went:—

"If I should live to be
 The last leaf upon the tree"—
 (I *might* put in: "I think I'd just as leaf!")
 "Let them smile, as I do now,
 At the old forsaken bough"—
 Well, he'd plagiarized it bodily, in brief!

But that cat of simple breeding
 Couldn't read the lines between,
 So she took it to a leading
 Magazine.

She was jarred and very sore
 When they showed her to the door.
 (I *might* hit off the *door* that was a *jar*!)
 To the spot she swift returned
 Where the poet sighed and yearned,
 And she told him that he'd gone a little far.
 "Your performance with this rhyme has
 Made me absolutely sick,"
 She remarked. "I think the time has
 Come to kick!"

I could fill up half the page
 With descriptions of her rage—
 (I *might* say that she went a bit *too fur*!)
 When he smiled and murmured: "Shoo!"
 "There is one thing I can do!"
 She answered with a wrathful kind of purr.
 "You may shoe me, an it suit you,
 But I feel my conscience bid
 Me, as tit for tat, to boot you!"
 (Which she did.)

The Moral of the plot
 (Though I say it, as should not!)
 Is: An editor is difficult to suit.
 But again there're other times
 When the man who fashions rhymes
 Is a rascal, and a bully one to boot!

THE VAINGLORIOUS OAK AND THE MODEST BULRUSH *

Guy Wetmore Carryl

A bulrush stood on a river's rim,
 And an oak that grew near by
 Looked down with cold *hauteur* on him,
 And addressed him this way: "Hi!"

* From *Fables for the Frivolous*, by permission of Harper & Bros.

The rush was a proud patrician, and
He retorted, "Don't you know,
What the veriest boor should understand,
That 'Hi' is low?"

This cutting rebuke the oak ignored.
He returned, "My slender friend,
I will frankly state that I'm somewhat bored
With the way you bow and bend."
"But you quite forget," the rush replied,
"It's an art these bows to do,
An art I wouldn't attempt if I'd
Such boughs as you."

"Of course," said the oak, "in my sapling days
My habit it was to bow,
But the wildest storm that the winds could raise
Would never disturb me now.
I challenge the breeze to make me bend,
And the blast to make me sway."
The shrewd little bulrush answered, "Friend,
Don't get so gay."

And the words had barely left his mouth
When he saw the oak turn pale,
For, racing along south-east-by-south,
Came ripping a raging gale.
And the rush bent low as the storm went past,
But stiffly stood the oak,
Though not for long, for he found the blast
No idle joke.

* * * * *

Imagine the lightning's gleaming bars,
Imagine the thunder's roar,
For that is exactly what eight stars
Are set in a row here for!
The oak lay prone when the storm was done,
While the rush, still quite erect,
Remarked aside, "What under the sun
Could one expect?"

And *The Moral*, I'd have you understand,
 Would have made La Fontaine blush,
 For it's this: Some storms come early, and
 Avoid the rush!

THE AHKOOND OF SWAT

"The Ahkoond of Swat is dead."—LONDON PAPERS OF JAN. 22, 1878

George Thomas Lanigan

What, what, what,
 What's the news from Swat?
 Sad news,
 Bad news,
 Comes by the cable led
 Through the Indian Ocean's bed,
 Through the Persian Gulf, the Red
 Sea and the Med-
 Iterranean—he's dead;
 The Ahkoond is dead!

For the Ahkoond I mourn,
 Who wouldn't?
 He strove to disregard the message stern,
 But he Ahkoodn't.
 Dead, dead, dead:
 (Sorrow, Swats!)
 Swats wha hae wi' Ahkoond bled,
 Swats whom he hath often led
 Onward to a gory bed,
 Or to victory,
 As the case might be.
 Sorrow, Swats!
 Tears shed,
 Shed tears like water.
 Your great Ahkoond is dead!
 That Swats the matter!

Mourn, city of Swat,
 Your great Ahkoond is not,
 But laid 'mid worms to rot.
 His mortal part alone, his soul was caught
 (Because he was a good Ahkoond)
 Up to the bosom of Mahound.

Though earthly walls his frame surround
 (Forever hallowed by the ground!)
 And skeptics mock the lowly mound
 And say "He's now of no Ahkoond!"

His soul is in the skies—
 The azure skies that bend above his loved
 Metropolis of Swat.
 He sees with larger, other eyes,
 Athwart all earthly mysteries—
 He knows what's Swat.

Let Swat bury the great Ahkoond
 With a noise of mourning and of lamentation!
 Let Swat bury the great Ahkoond
 With the noise of the mourning of the Swattish nation!
 Fallen is at length
 Its tower of strength;
 Its sun is dimmed ere it had nooned:
 Dead lies the great Ahkoond,
 The great Ahkoond of Swat
 Is not!

THE LEGEND OF HEINZ VON STEIN

Charles Godfrey Leland

Out rode from his wild, dark castle
 The terrible Heinz von Stein;
 He came to the door of a tavern
 And gazed on its swinging sign.

He sat himself down at a table,
 And growled for a bottle of wine;
 Up came with a flask and a corkscrew
 A maiden of beauty divine.

Then, seized with a deep love-longing,
 He uttered, "O damosel mine,
 Suppose you just give a few kisses
 To the valorous Ritter von Stein!"

But she answered, "The kissing business
 Is entirely out of my line;
 And I certainly will not begin it
 On a countenance ugly as thine!"

READING ALOUD

Oh, then the bold knight was angry,
 And cursed both coarse and fine;
 And asked, "How much is the swindle
 For your sour and nasty wine?"

And fiercely he rode to the castle
 And sat himself down to dine;
 And this is the dreadful legend
 Of the terrible Heinz von Stein.

JESSE JAMES *

(*A Design in Red and Yellow for a Nickel Library*)

William Rose Benét

Jesse James was a two-gun man,
 (*Roll on, Missouri!*)
 Strong-arm chief of an outlaw clan,
 (*From Kansas to Illinois!*)
 He twirled an old Colt forty-five;
 (*Roll on, Missouri!*)
 They never took Jesse James alive.
 (*Roll, Missouri, roll!*)

Jesse James was King of the Wes';
 (*Cataracts in the Missouri!*)
 He'd a di'mon' heart in his lef' breas';
 (*Brown Missouri rolls!*)
 He'd a fire in his heart no hurt could stifle;
 (*Thunder, Missouri!*)
 Lion eyes an' a Winchester rifle.
 (*Missouri, roll down!*)

Jesse James rode a pinto hawse;
 Come at night to a water-cawse;
 Tetched with the rowel that pinto's flank;
 She sprung the torrent from bank to bank.

Jesse rode through a sleepin' town;
 Looked the moonlit street both up an' down;
 Crack-crack-crack, the street ran flames
 An' a great voice cried, "I'm Jesse James!"

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Hawse an' afoot they're after Jess!

(Roll on, Missouri!)

Spurrin' an' spurrin'—but he's gone Wes'.

(Brown Missouri rolls!)

He was ten foot tall when he stood in his boots;

(Lightnin' like the Missouri!)

More'n a match fer sich galoots.

(Roll, Missouri, roll!)

Jesse James rode outa the sage;

Roun' the rocks come the swayin' stage;

Straddlin' the road a giant stan's

An' a great voice bellers, "Throw up yer han's!"

Jesse raked in the di'mon' rings,

The big gold watches an' the yuther things;

Jesse divvied 'em then an' thar

With a cryin' child had lost her mar.

They're creepin'; they're crawlin'; they're stalkin' Jess;

(Roll on, Missouri!)

They's a rumor he's gone much further Wes';

(Roll, Missouri, roll!)

They's word of a cayuse hitched to the bars

(Ruddy clouds on Missouri!)

Of a golden sunset that bursts into stars.

(Missouri, roll down!)

Jesse James rode hell fer leather;

He was a hawse an' a man together;

In a cave in a mountain high up in air

He lived with a rattlesnake, a wolf, an' a bear.

Jesse's heart was as sof' as a woman;

Fer guts an' stren'th he was sooper-human;

He could put six shots through a woodpecker's eye

And take in one swaller a gallon o' rye.

They sought him here an' they sought him there,

(Roll on, Missouri!)

But he strides by night through the ways of the air;

(Brown Missouri rolls!)

They say he was took an' they say he is dead,

(Thunder, Missouri!)

But he ain't—he's a sunset overhead!

(Missouri down to the sea!)

Jesse James was a Hercules.
 When he went through the woods he tore up the trees,
 When he went on the plains he smoked the groun'
 An' the hull lan' shuddered fer miles aroun'.

Jesse James wore a red bandanner
 That waved on the breeze like the Star Spangled Banner;
 In seven states he cut up dadoes.
 He's gone with the buffler an' the desperadoes.

Yes, Jesse James was a two-gun man
(Roll on, Missouri!)
 The same as when this song began;
(From Kansas to Illinois!)
 An' when you see a sunset burst into flames
(Lightnin' like the Missouri!)
 Or a thunderstorm blaze—that's Jesse James!
(Hear that Missouri roll!)

THE PIRATE DON DURKE OF DOWDEE *

Mildred Plew Meigs

Ho, for the Pirate Don Durke of Dowdee!
 He was as wicked as wicked could be,
 But oh, he was perfectly gorgeous to see!
 The Pirate Don Durke of Dowdee.

His conscience, of course, was as black as a bat,
 But he had a floppety plume on his hat,
 And when he went walking it jiggled—like that!
 The plume of the Pirate Dowdee.

His coat it was crimson and cut with a slash,
 And often as ever he twirled his mustache,
 Deep down in the ocean the mermaids went splash,
 Because of Don Durke of Dowdee.

Moreover, Dowdee had a purple tattoo,
 And stuck in his belt where he buckled it through
 Were a dagger, a dirk and a squizzamaroo,
 For fierce was the pirate Dowdee.

* By permission of the author.

So fearful he was he would shoot at a puff,
 And always at sea when the weather grew rough,
 He drank from a bottle and wrote on his cuff,
 Did Pirate Don Durke of Dowdee.

Oh, he had a cutlass that swung at his thigh,
 And he had a parrot called Pepperkin Pye,
 And a zigzaggy scar at the end of his eye,
 Had Pirate Don Durke of Dowdee.

He kept in a cavern, this buccaneer bold,
 A curious chest that was covered with mould,
 And all of his pockets were jingly with gold!
 Oh jing! went the gold of Dowdee.

His conscience, of course, it was crook'd like a squash,
 But both of his boots made a slickery slosh
 And he went through the world with a wonderful swash,
 Did Pirate Don Durke of Dowdee.

It's true he was wicked as wicked could be,
 His sins they outnumbered a hundred and three,
 But oh, he was perfectly gorgeous to see,
 The Pirate Don Durke of Dowdee.

WHO DID WHICH?

OR

WHO INDEED? *

Ogden Nash

Oft in the stilly night,
 When the mind is fumbling fuzzily,
 I brood about how little I know,
 And know that little so muzzily.
 Ere slumber's chains have bound me,
 I think it would suit me nicely,
 If I knew one tenth of the little I know,
 But knew that tenth precisely.

O Delius, Sibelius,
 And What's-his-name Aurelius,
 O Manet, O Monet,

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Mrs. Siddons and the Cid!
I know each name
Has an oriflamme of fame,
I'm sure they all did something,
But I can't think what they did.
Oft in the sleepless dawn
I feel my brain is hominy
When I try to identify famous men,
Their countries and anno Domini.
Potemkin, Pushkin, Ruskin,
Velásquez, Pulaski, Laski;
They are locked together in one gray cell,
And I seem to have lost the passkey.
O Tasso, Picasso,
O Talleyrand and Sally Rand,
Elijah, Elisha,
Eugene Aram, Eugène Sue,
Don Quixote, Donn Byrne,
Rosencrantz and Guildenstern,
Humperdinck and Rumpelstiltskin,
They taunt me, two by two.
At last, in the stilly night,
When the mind is bubbling vaguely,
I grasp my history by the horns
And face it Haig and Haigly.
O, Austerlitz fought at Metternich,
And Omar Khayyam wrote *Moby Dick*,
Blücher invented a kind of shoe,
And Kohler of Kohler, the Waterloo;
Croesus was turned to gold by Minos,
And Thomas à Kempis was Thomas Aquinas.
Two Irish Saints were Patti and Micah,
The Light Brigade rode at Balalaika,
If you seek a roué to irk your aunt,
Kubla Khan but Immanuel Kant,
And no one has ever been transmogrified
Until by me he has been biogrified.
Gently my eyelids close;
I'd rather be good than clever;
And I'd rather have my facts all wrong
Than have no facts whatever.

PARSLEY FOR VICE-PRESIDENT! *

Ogden Nash

I'd like to be able to say a good word for parsley, but I can't,
And after all what can you find to say for something that even the
dictionary dismisses as a biennial umbelliferous plant?
I will not venture to deny that it is umbelliferous,
I will only add that it is of a nasty green color, and faintly odoriferous.
Now, there is one sin for which a lot of cooks and hostesses are some-
day going to have to atone,
Which is that they can't bear to cook anything and leave it alone.
No, they see food as something to base a lot of beautiful dreams and
romance on,
Which explains lamb chops with pink and blue pants on.
Everything has to be all decorated and garnished
So the guests will be amazed and astarnished,
And whatever you get to eat, it's sprinkled with a lot of good old umbel-
liferous parsley looking as limp and wistful as Lillian Gish,
And it is limpest, and wistfullest, and also thickest, on fish.
Indeed, I think maybe one reason for the disappearance of Enoch Arden
Was that his wife had an idea that mackerel tasted better if instead of
looking like mackerel it looked like a garden.
Well, anyhow, there's the parsley cluttering up your food,
And the problem is to get it off without being rude,
And first of all you try to scrape it off with your fork,
And you might as well try to shave with a cork,
And then you surreptitiously try your fingers,
And you get covered with butter and gravy, but the parsley lingers,
And you turn red and smile at your hostess and compliment her on the
recipe and ask her where she found it,
And then you return to the parsley and as a last resort you try to eat
around it,
And the hostess says, Oh you are just picking at it, is there something
wrong with it?
So all you can do is eat it all up, and the parsley along with it,
And now is the time for all good parsleyphobes to come to the aid of the
menu and exhibit their gumption,
And proclaim that any dish that has either a taste or an appearance that
can be improved by parsley is ipso facto a dish unfit for human
consumption.

* From *I'm a Stranger Here Myself*, copyright, 1938, by Ogden Nash, and reprinted by permission of Little, Brown & Co.

VERY LIKE A WHALE *

Ogden Nash

One thing that literature would be greatly the better for
 Would be a more restricted employment by authors of simile and
 metaphor.

Authors of all races, be they Greeks, Romans, Teutons or Celts,
 Can't seem to say that anything is the thing it is but have to go out of
 their way to say that it is like something else.

What does it mean when we are told

That the Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold?

In the first place, George Gordon Byron had had enough experience
 To know that it probably wasn't just one Assyrian, it was a lot of
 Assyrians.

However, as too many arguments are apt to induce apoplexy and thus
 hinder longevity,

We'll let it pass as one Assyrian for the sake of brevity.

Now then, this particular Assyrian, the one whose cohorts were gleam-
 ing in purple and gold,

Just what does the poet mean when he says he came down like a wolf
 on the fold?

In heaven and earth more than is dreamed of in our philosophy there
 are a great many things,

But I don't imagine that among them there is a wolf with purple and
 gold cohorts or purple and gold anythings.

No, ~~no~~, Lord Byron, before I'll believe that this Assyrian was actually
like a wolf I must have some kind of proof;

Did he run on all fours and did he have a hairy tail and a big red mouth
 and big white teeth and did he say Woof woof woof?

Frankly I think it very unlikely, and all you were entitled to say, at the
 very most,

Was that the Assyrian cohorts came down like a lot of Assyrian cohorts
 about to destroy the Hebrew host.

But that wasn't fancy enough for Lord Byron, oh ~~dear me~~ no, he had to
 invent a lot of figures of speech and then interpolate them,

With the result that whenever you mention Old Testament soldiers to
 people they say Oh yes, they're the ones that a lot of wolves dressed
 up in gold and purple ate them.

That's the kind of thing that's being done all the time by poets, from
 Homer to Tennyson;

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They're always comparing ladies to lilies and veal to venison,
And they always say things like that the snow is a white blanket after a
winter storm.

Oh it is, is it, all right then, you sleep under a six-inch blanket of snow
and I'll sleep under a half-inch blanket of unpoetical blanket
material and we'll see which one keeps warm,

And after that maybe you'll begin to comprehend dimly
What I mean by too much metaphor and simile.

Post Ogden Nash puts things succinctly
he says what he thinks and often
invents words to express his exact feeling
is he expressed a real simile
is simile
+ metaphors

How often have there to invent perfect
descriptive similes metaphors
and similes.

Chapter 8

REVIEW

IF INTERPRETATION is a teachable art, it must have a well-defined method. There must be a place to begin, a first step, and a coherent technique built upon this foundation. The first task of an interpreter of literature is to gain a clear understanding of what he would read, an understanding derived from careful analysis of linguistic structure. Words must be understood, both singly and in their combinations into meaningful groups. Those that are important in conveying meaning must be distinguished from those that are not. The function of each word group in its relation to other groups must be studied. When this literal meaning of a passage is clearly grasped, the reader must consider how the author intends it to be received, what mood and attitude accompany and modify the meaning. Then some steps must be taken to intensify the author's thought and intention so that they will vividly impress the hearers. And in reading verse all of this must be harmonized with the demands of meter and rhyme.

We need now an exercise in which we can draw together all the precepts and principles so far presented. We shall find almost an ideal opportunity to embody them all in that superbly ironic bit of verse by Edwin Arlington Robinson called "Miniver Cheevy." In it we shall find a challenge to our keenest insight, a trial of our finest techniques. All that we have learned of grouping, of emphasis, of pausing, of attitude, will be needed, and all the devices for increasing vividness. These seemingly simple stanzas must be carefully analyzed if we are to prevent the words from flowing past our lips so rhythmically that their sense is lost. And how much mean-

MINIVER CHEEVY *

Edwin Arlington Robinson

Miniver Cheevy, child of scorn,
Grew lean while he assailed the seasons;
He wept that he was ever born,
And he had reasons.

Miniver loved the days of old
When swords were bright and steeds were prancing;
The vision of a warrior bold
Would set him dancing.

Miniver sighed for what was not,
And dreamed and rested from his labors;
He dreamed of Thebes and Camelot,
And Priam's neighbors.

Miniver mourned the ripe renown
That made so many a name so fragrant;
He mourned Romance, now on the town,
And Art, a vagrant.

Miniver loved the Medici,
Albeit he had never seen one;
He would have sinned incessantly
Could he have been one.

Miniver cursed the commonplace
And eyed a khaki suit with loathing;
He missed the mediaeval grace
Of iron clothing.

Miniver scorned the gold he sought,
But sore annoyed was he without it;
Miniver thought, and thought, and thought,
And thought about it.

Miniver Cheevy, born too late,
Scratched his head and kept on thinking;
Miniver coughed and called it fate,
And kept on drinking.

* From *Town Down the River*, by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

ing they carry! Here is a whole life history in thirty-two lines. Theodore Dreiser couldn't have told it in less than a thousand pages!

Finding the meaning. This story is already so highly condensed, it is revealed so largely by means of suggestion, that an attempt further to condense it into a *précis* is almost futile. You will find it more profitable to expand it into a complete life history. Try, then, writing in detail a Life of Miniver Cheevy. Include every detail that is suggested by these lines, but *only* what is suggested.

But first, of course, you must make a careful analysis of the poem, line by line. Miniver is first characterized as a "child of scorn." Perhaps this is the keynote of his character. His assailing the seasons was not, of course, mere complaining about the weather; it was a lament that he had been "born too late." Does line 4 mean that he really had reasons for weeping, or that he *thought* he had, or that he could *give* you reasons? What the reasons were is explained in the stanzas that follow.

What does Miniver's love of bright swords and prancing steeds tell you of his disposition? Was he dull or lively? sour or sanguine? Note that these visions set him dancing. But note also that he dreamed and rested. Explain "Priam's neighbors." What did Miniver find so attractive in Thebes, Camelot, and Troy? You must understand the allurements of these cities.

Note that *mourned* in the fourth stanza echoes *sighed for* in the third. This fourth stanza needs especially close study. What does it mean to be "on the town"? If you are not familiar with this idiom you will find it explained in a good dictionary. And *who* was on the town? *Who* was a vagrant? Did the poet mean to say that Art was a vagrant, or that Miniver was now a vagrant?

Why did Miniver love the Medici? And why are you told that he had never seen one? *Might* he have seen one? When did he live? and where? He was familiar with khaki uniforms, which places him in the present. How, then, do you account for this line? Why would he have sinned incessantly if he could have belonged to this famous family? Was he evil by nature? Does his scorn of the commonplace imply that he was really superior in his tastes, and would have been happy and at home in the gorgeous menage of Lorenzo the Magnificent? He might have lived there, as did

many others, on the support of his patron, and would not have been afflicted with the uncomfortable necessity of providing himself with gold, which he both scorned and needed.

This problem of subsistence seems to have baffled him, and reduced him to futile philosophizing. Or how do you interpret lines 27 and 28? Has the discouragement and disintegration suggested in the last stanza been foreshadowed above? Miniver keeps on thinking of what? Why does he cough? What does he attribute to fate? Be very specific about all these points. There is much more here than meets the eye.

Attitude. With the thought mastered, we are ready to consider that all-important aspect of interpretation—*attitude*. The essential question to answer is, How do you, the interpreter, *feel* about the story you are telling? How do you feel toward Miniver Cheevy? You should feel, of course, as the author feels, but you will find that he is curiously impersonal. Comb the story as you will, you will find not a single word that expresses his personal attitude toward the man whose story he is telling. Cannot you, then, merely tell the story also without giving it any color or mood? That would be to dodge your responsibility as an interpreter. You must reveal to your hearers, as the cold page cannot, just how the story is to be received. The oral interpreter may never be as impersonal as an author. The function of an interpreter is to interpret.

If you will read carefully between the lines, you will discover several suggestions from which you should be able to construct a sound and defensible conception of the author's mood. Do you find any evidence of strong condemnation, scorn, or disgust, or, on the other hand, of sympathy, pity, or justification? You will probably agree that none of these is strongly suggested. Neither is there any strong suggestion of either gayety or gravity. Surely you will not find here the mood of tragedy. The last stanza presents a drab picture, but even it is lightened by the comic detail of scratching the head. It is impossible to conceive of scratching one's head as a tragic gesture. If you observe carefully (and our first rule is *observe*) you will find other comic touches: look again at the fourth line, and at the tenth; and consider again who was "on the town" while mourning the lack of Romance in modern life. And is there nothing comic in a vagrant dreamer bemoaning the decay of art? Note

again line 18, and the rest of that fifth stanza, and all of the seventh stanza. Do you not find here a wise and tolerant and benign spirit of Comedy, which looks upon Miniver's weaknesses and absurdities, not with annoyance, scorn, or contempt, but with amused and kindly appreciation of their ridiculousness? Read again the selection from Meredith's *Essay on Comedy* in Chapter 3, and the other selection from this essay among the readings at the end of Chapter 3. Or better, read, if it is available, the entire essay. See whether it does not define the appropriate mood for the reading of "Miniver Cheevy." Then see whether you cannot read it with this highly civilized comic appreciation, with a "finely-tempered smile, showing sunlight of the mind, mental richness rather than noisy enormity."

Vividness of expression. None of the methods discussed in Chapter 4 will be so helpful in interpreting Miniver Cheevy's story as the use of imagination in thinking your way into the meaning of the lines. If thought and feeling are really present in consciousness as you read, they will emerge somewhere visibly—perhaps in a lifted eyebrow, or in wrinkles around the mouth, or a lengthened jaw, or a depressed shoulder. Labor to re-create the thought so vividly that you feel it in your muscles.

In line 4 can you suggest visibly the exaggerated plausibility with which Miniver would probably give his reasons? In the next stanza, let your own eye brighten sympathetically to the vision of a warrior bold. Reflect Miniver's enthusiasm, but don't attempt to impersonate him. Then you may sigh with gentle mock sympathy as Miniver sighed for what was not. Beware of maintaining a constant mood. Vary your expression as the pattern changes in successive stanzas.

The absurdly obvious statement in line 18 needs special attention. How do you say absurdly obvious things? How would you say, for instance, that you greatly admired Julius Caesar, although, of course, you had never known him personally? Do not attempt to moralize in your statement of Miniver's sinning in the next two lines; retain your comic appreciation. You might appropriately continue with the exclamation "The gay old rogue!" Something swanking is suggested by the "mediaeval grace of iron clothing." And do not miss the contrast in the paradox that Miniver scorned the gold

he sought. Try to suggest his comic puzzlement in wrestling with the situation—by merely thinking about it.

The last stanza is rich in suggestions: maladjustment, futility, rationalization, despair, disintegration, tuberculosis (?), dissipation, death. Can you get them all expressed? You will need a vivid imagination and alert vocal and physical responsiveness to every shade of meaning.

Metrical variation. These stanzas are so very regular in form that you will have to watch carefully to guard against singsong. Note that every stanza begins with *Miniver*. The rhymes are frequent and conspicuous. Don't accentuate them, but rather minimize them wherever you can. That is, when you have a choice between a rhyme word and another word near it, put your emphasis on the neighboring word. And whenever a sense accent or a logical pause conflicts with the metrical accent or verse pause, make the most of it. In the second line, for instance, you can break the regularity by stressing the two successive strong syllables *grew lean*. In the third line the scansion calls for a stress on *he*, but the sense does not. Hurry lightly past the word. And so with others. There is little danger that you will completely obscure the rhythm. There is much more danger of creating a singsong that will obscure the sense.

Conclusion. This may seem a too elaborate study for so brief a poem, but experience shows that it demands and repays such study. When the analysis has been completed the poem should be read aloud again and again, until all its subtleties are revealed in your voice and face. But in this, as in any finished artistic creation, the marks of the artist's labor should be erased. "What one takes the greatest pains to do," said Michelangelo, "should look as if it had been thrown off quickly, almost without effort—nay, in despite of the truth, as though it cost one no trouble. The great precept is: Take infinite pains, and make something that looks effortless."

Chapter 9

POETRY

For, don't you mark? we're made so that we love
First when we see them painted, things we have passed
Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see;
And so they are better, painted—better for us,
Which is the same thing. Art was given for that.

Robert Browning—"Fra Lippo Lippi"

IF WE may venture to paraphrase the words that Browning put into the mouth of this Florentine painter, and apply them to poetry rather than to painting, they would mean substantially this: "We are so made that many of our common familiar experiences are not really understood or appreciated until we find them illuminated and clarified in the language of poetry. Then they have a new meaning and a greater value for us. And the discovery of this deeper significance in things gives us pleasure. This pleasure in discovery is the proper and characteristic effect of poetry."

Aristotle called it the pleasure of recognition. "I think," said Keats, "poetry should surprise with a fine excess and not by singularity—it should strike the reader as a wording of his own highest thoughts, and appear almost a remembrance."¹

A wording of your own highest thoughts—almost a remembrance. These statements come very close to describing the effect that good poetry should have upon you. Let us test them by applying them to some notable lines of poetry. Doubtless you have been impressed by the sight of a bright full moon in an otherwise empty

¹ Maurice Buxton Forman (ed.), *The Letters of John Keats* (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), p. 108.

sky, felt something you could not express until Wordsworth articulated it for you:

The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare.

Doubtless you have felt that more credit should go to those who stand ready but are never called to participate in great events. Milton expresses it for you:

They also serve who only stand and wait.

Or perhaps you have felt a disturbing sadness when you are aware that beautiful summer days cannot continue forever, and you find your mood aptly described by Shakespeare:

O! how shall summer's honey breath hold out
Against the wreckful siege of battering days?

Such lines are the very essence of poetry. Such phrases give sharper form and additional meaning to our dimly perceived thoughts, moods, and impressions, and so we feel that we have learned something from them and they give us pleasure. "Art was given for that"—to profit and delight.

T. S. Eliot says that so far as a poet expresses in his poetry "what other people feel, he is also affecting that feeling by making it more conscious: in giving people words for their feelings, he is teaching them something about themselves."² As another writer puts it, in reading a poem "we hardly separate our recognition that the feeling is, or has been, our feeling too from recognition that our own feeling is more precious now that it has an expression adequate for it."³

Here are some other memorable lines from standard poetry that may stir within you a kind of pleasure of remembrance, and enhance the value of your familiar feelings and impressions. All are taken from poems in this book.

The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.

² T. S. Eliot, "The Social Function of Poetry," in R. W. Stallman (ed.), *Critiques and Essays in Criticism* (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1949), p. 113.

³ N. F. Doubleday, *Studies in Poetry* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1949), p. 19.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage.

Come, and trip it as you go,
On the light fantastic toe.

His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love.

Boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.

Come lovely and soothing death,
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving.

O, wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

A Creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food.

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun.

The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways.

And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

What's in a name? that which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet.

And so we might go on. But there is more to poetry than this, and before we attempt to interpret it for others we need a broader and deeper definition of its essential nature.

We shall turn to one of the oldest and soundest analyses of poetry that has ever been written—Aristotle's *Poetics*. Its soundness is attested by the fact that it has survived so many generations of literary critics, and is accepted and used by many present-day scholars.

The nature of art. All the arts, said Aristotle, are forms of imitation. They differ from each other in the mediums, the manners, and the objects of their imitation. Some imitate with color and form, others with rhythm, harmony, or language. In general, the

object of artistic imitation is nature, including human nature. In poetry and drama the objects imitated are men in action—their characters, their deeds, their emotions. In lyric poetry, the kind we are chiefly concerned with, the principal objects of imitation are men's moods and feelings and impressions. Art, then, is essentially *imitation of nature*. As Shakespeare put it in Hamlet's advice to the players, the object of acting is, "to hold . . . the mirror up to Nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his (its) form and pressure."

But art did not mean to Aristotle a servile copying, a photographic reproduction, of nature. Poetry, he said, represents not what has happened, but what *might* happen, what a certain type of person is likely or is bound to do or say on a given occasion, how he would speak or act according to the law of probability or necessity. As Professor S. H. Butcher said, "Poetry is an expression of the universal element in human life. . . . Fine art eliminates what is transient and particular and reveals the permanent and essential features of the original. It discovers the form toward which an object tends, the result which nature strives to attain, but rarely or never can attain. Beneath the individual it finds the universal. It passes beyond the bare reality given by nature, and expresses a purified form of reality disengaged from accident, and freed from conditions which thwart its development. The real and ideal from this point of view are not opposites, as they are sometimes conceived to be. The ideal is the real, but rid of contradictions, unfolding itself according to the laws of its own being, apart from alien influences and the disturbances of chance." The artist "aims at something better than the actual. He reproduces a new thing, not the actual thing of experience, not a copy of reality, but a higher reality."⁴

A work of art, then, is "an idealized representation of human life." The peculiar function of the artist is to "divine nature's unfulfilled intention," and reveal her ideal in a product apparent to the senses of the beholders.

Individual differences do not matter. To say that poetry is "an expression of the universal element in human life" implies that it will have the same meaning for all who are exposed to it, that its

⁴ S. H. Butcher, *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art* (London: The Macmillan Co., 1895), pp. 151-52.

appeal is universal, and that its effect is uniform on all who read or hear it. This aspect of universality has been questioned by many modern writers. That we differ from each other in many respects is obvious to all, and modern psychologists have had a field day in discovering and pointing out these differences. They find that since our response to any new stimulus is conditioned by our past experiences we therefore differ in our responses, our habits, our emotions, our thoughts, and our personalities. They find also that we differ in our muscular, nervous, and glandular structures, and so cannot be expected to respond in the same way or in the same degree to outer stimuli. Some of us are sluggish and inert; others are emotional and dynamic. Some are sensitive and easily moved; others are calloused and indifferent.

In our imaginative susceptibility especially they have discovered remarkable variations. For some of us images are sharp and clear; for others, blurred and vague. Some perceive auditory images more vividly; others, visual, or tactual, or kinesthetic images. "The thought of an autumn day," says Professor Downey, "may make us *see*, in imagination, the tarnished leaves whirling in gusts over the withered grass by the wayside; or *hear* their crackling, infinitely weary; or *crunch* a leaf in our hands or powder it beneath our reluctant feet; or we may be oppressed by the *smell* of dry dead things. And yet neither vision nor sound nor odour may embody the thought. It may be realized only as a sense of oppression, of a summer gone, of weary, lagging feet and hearts."⁵

Now all of this is important in the appreciation of poetry and in the interpretation of it for others. If Andrew Marvell's line:

Ripe apples drop about my head

recalls to one person an occasion when he was painfully injured by a falling apple, and to another, only the lush abundance of autumn; if Thomas Gray's line:

The ploughman homeward plods his weary way

suggests to one a dirty and bedraggled farmer, reeking with sweat and the smell of horses, and to another, an idealized rustic, con-

⁵ June Downey, *Creative Imagination* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1929).

tented over a day's work well done, what can be the meaning of "interpretation" or "communication"?

The answer is that since we are all branches of the same tree our similarities greatly outnumber our differences. Professor I. A. Richards, who is respected both as a psychologist and as a literary critic, says that, "Within racial boundaries, and perhaps within the limits of certain very general types, *many impulses are common to all men*. Their stimuli and the courses which they take seem to be uniform." He continues, "Some impulses remain the same, taking the same course on the same occasions, from age to age, from pre-historic times until today." He finds that for every art there is "a type of impulse which is extraordinarily uniform."⁶ It is to these common impulses that the poet appeals. That is why the poems of Homer, Sappho, and Theocritus still have charm for us after all the intervening centuries.

As to the fact that we do not all see images in the same way Professor Richards says, "The sensory qualities of images, their vivacity, clearness, fullness of detail and so on, do not bear any constant relation to their effects." Some people, he says, seem to enjoy poetry without experiencing any imagery at all. "Something takes the place of vivid images in these people." The effects of a poem may be the same on two people though they do not see the same images at all, for "images which are different in their sensory qualities may have the same effects."⁷ We may rest assured, then, that if we are reasonably normal people we can get from poetry the values it is intended to give.

Expressionism in art. Some may be troubled also by the current vogue of expressionism in art, the theory that the artist, instead of imitating nature, merely expresses himself. Instead of observing people, as did Chaucer, and Shakespeare, and Dickens, some modern artists turn their attention upon their own sometimes disordered souls and give us a series of disorganized impressions which are often so eccentric that they are utterly unintelligible to a normal person. There are those who "construct puzzles from their unique experiences which only an omniscient God can unriddle," or which

⁶ I. A. Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1924), pp. 190-93.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 119, 120, 123.

can be understood only when they "float upon a bottomless quagmire of annotation."⁸ As Peter Viereck, one of the best of our modern poets, says, their cult of obscurity is stifling the growth of poetry; they "forbid anybody except crossword-puzzle decoders to get fun out of poetry, not to mention beauty."⁹ There is a difference, as T. S. Eliot said, between "the writer who is merely eccentric and grotesque, and the genuine poet: the former may have feelings that are unique, but which cannot be shared, or are not worth sharing, and which are therefore socially useless; while the genuine poet discovers new shades and variations of sensibility in which others can participate."¹⁰ Since we are dealing definitely with the communication of literature, we need not be concerned with that which cannot be shared.

We must be careful also not to assume that all self-expression is art, and all eccentricity is genius. Any child can express himself by daubing a paper with paint, beating a keyboard with his rag doll, or linking syllables together into a meaningless jargon, but in so doing he is not an artist, deserving of our attention and respect. Many geniuses have been eccentric, but that does not mean that anyone who is eccentric is a genius. And the fact that it is possible to find in the long history of art some few geniuses who were not understood or appreciated in their day does not mean that a present-day artist who is not understood or appreciated is therefore a genius. Society has always been burdened with would-be geniuses, many of them properly confined to insane asylums. We are too easily taken in by writers who affect a mysterious air and solemnly assert their own importance. Our gullibility in the presence of such creatures is appropriately satirized by W. S. Gilbert in these lines from his opera, *Patience*:

And every one will say,
As you walk your mystic way,
"If this young man expresses himself in terms too deep for *me*,
Why, what a very singularly deep young man this deep young man
must be!"

⁸ See Donald Stauffer, *The Golden Nightingale* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1949), p. 27.

⁹ See John Ciardi's *Mid-Century American Poets* (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1950), p. 29.

¹⁰ "The Social Function of Poetry," in R. W. Stallman (ed.), *Critiques and Essays in Criticism* (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1949), p. 113.

There is some warrant for believing that poets are partly mad. Plato seemed to think so, and Shakespeare groups them with lunatics and lovers. Many artists have been negligent of social conventions and regarded by their contemporaries as more than a little peculiar. But madness in a poet's behavior does not necessarily mean madness in his work. Indeed, there is abundant reason to believe that artists, as revealed by their works, are the sanest and most normal of men. Their madness is a kind of inspiration which enables them to see more deeply into the heart of things than ordinary mortals can. The highest tribute we can pay an artist is not to say that he is so eccentric or "original" that nobody understands him, but to regard him as so sane and normal that his appeal is universal. Poetry, said Shelley, "is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds." And T. S. Eliot, whose own poetry is often maddeningly obscure, has said that the "greatest poets are those who have given the most pleasure to the greatest number, and the greatest *variety*, of human beings, throughout the period of time since they wrote."¹¹

If, then, you come upon a modern poem which, after careful study, you find unintelligible, one that has not proved its worth by giving pleasure to a great number of human beings, you need not become discouraged and conclude that you are lacking in the power of appreciation. It *may* be the poet that is at fault, not you. And, of course, if he does not make himself readily understood, his poem is not suitable for reading aloud, for oral communication to a general audience.

We need sensitivity to poetic effects. This, however, does not mean that we should find poetry as easy to read as the morning newspaper. It has a manner and a language of its own. "The appreciation of poetry," says David Daiches, "demands both more effort and more experience in reading than the appreciation of prose. It is strange that this should be so, for poetry is in a sense a more primitive kind of art than prose and at one time in the history of every civilization was more universally used and appreciated."¹²

¹¹ T. S. Eliot, "The Social Function of Poetry," in R. W. Stallman (ed.), *Critiques and Essays in Criticism* (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1949), p. 111.

¹² David Daiches, *A Study of Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1948), pp. 160-61.

In our modern sophistication we have lost "the virginity of the spirit, which enjoys with astonishment and fear." We are too literal-minded. We need to win back some of our childlike acceptance of mystery and fancy and ambiguity, our early delight in the sounds of words and the flow of rhythm, a susceptibility to images and symbols—even vague ones, for this is the stuff of which poetry consists. If we are so literal-minded that we dispute as untrue such a statement as this by Richard Lovelace,

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;

if we do not relish the sounds of the words and their suggestions in such a passage as Tennyson's

The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees;

we are not properly attuned to the appreciation of poetry. Note the pretended ridicule of poetic language in Ogden Nash's "Very Like a Whale," p. 236.

We need **long-continued intercourse with the best models.** Besides this "virginity of the spirit" we need a willingness to expose ourselves to poetry, to study it, and to learn its language and idiom. Wordsworth said, "An *accurate* taste in poetry, and in all the other arts, as Joshua Reynolds has observed, is an *acquired* talent, which can only be produced by thought and a long-continued intercourse with the best models of composition."¹³ As I. A. Richards says, "The truth is that very much of the best poetry is necessarily ambiguous in its immediate effect."¹⁴ Its language may be highly figurative; its sentences are often inverted or elliptical; its vocabulary may contain many rare or obsolete words. Poets are fond of double meanings, of paradox, and irony. Their allusions to persons, places, events, myths, legends, and to other literary works are often so rich and various that we can follow them only with the aid of dictionaries and reference books. But we can, by the method Wordsworth prescribed, by "long-continued intercourse with the best models," come to appreciate and enjoy poetry.

¹³ Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, 1815.

¹⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 291.

And it should be noted that there are different levels of understanding and appreciation. For many poems a first reading, which yields only the surface meaning and the pleasure derived from sound and meter, will furnish enough profit and delight to encourage us to further study. And if one is satisfied with these first surface impressions and does not seek beyond them, he is still getting legitimate enjoyment from poetry. Indeed Coleridge once said, "Poetry gives most pleasure when only generally and not perfectly understood." And we must recognize that analysis may go so far that it destroys all enjoyment of the poem. Some modern critics atomize poetry so completely that it can yield them no pleasure beyond the pleasure of analysis. And they read into it dark and subtle meanings and esoteric philosophies that the poet himself never dreamed of. "Nothing is easier," says David Daiches, "for a critic with any skill at analysis than to maintain that no poem can be good unless it is complex and paradoxical and then proceed to demonstrate the qualities of complexity and paradox in the poems he likes and to show their absence in those he dislikes."¹⁵

We need good judgment and willingness to study. The interpreter must have a judicious temperament, a well-balanced judgment. He must find the happy mean between tearing the poem to pieces and destroying its value as a poem, and skimming off only surface impressions which leave most of its true values unexplored. A judicious temperament is needed also in determining what is significant and valuable in the poem, where its focus of meaning and feeling lies, just where it succeeds in its proper function and where it fails.

Few of us realize how completely it is possible for a judicious and sympathetic critic to know a poem. He may know it and understand it better than the man who wrote it. By study of the poet's work, his methods and habits of production, he may come to know the poet's intentions better than the poet himself knows them. He might even be able to correct the poet's less successful passages, bring them up to the level of the best ones, and thus make them more typical of the poet than what was originally written. The artist, we have found, tries to represent nature, to do it by eliminating what is transient and temporary and accidental, and revealing

¹⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 164.

what is essential and typical—nature's ideal form. As Joshua Reynolds said, "he corrects nature by herself, her imperfect state by her more perfect." And just so the critic may then correct the poet by himself, his imperfect work by his more perfect. Diderot thought that an actor might go even farther and *enhance* the ideal type invented by the poet. "Sometimes," he said, "the poet feels more deeply than the actor; sometimes, and perhaps oftener, the actor's conception is stronger than the poet's." He cites Voltaire's astonished exclamation when he heard a brilliant actress in a part that he had written: "Did I really write that?" At that moment, Diderot says, "the ideal type in the speaking of the part went well beyond the poet's ideal in the writing of it."¹⁶

A modern composer of music has declared that he never actually understood his own work until he heard it conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. "A composer's idea of his own work is not necessarily the correct one," said Morton Gould, and "he understands my work better than I do." He tells of his difficulty in conducting one of his own works, his inability to "make it come off," his feeling that he had written it wrong. Then he went to hear Mitropoulos conduct it, and he says, "Here he was conducting my own work, . . . and suddenly I heard it the way I had intended it."¹⁷

Note that this penetrating interpretation was based upon study not of the artist's life and personality but of his *work*. A work of art exists quite apart from the artist who created it. It is to be studied and interpreted for its own sake, not because it is a part of its author's life history. Critics have spent too much time studying poets instead of poems. What the poet had for breakfast on the morning he wrote his poem is of no concern to the interpreter. Even the poet's philosophy of life may shed no light on the poem. The poem's value does not depend upon who wrote it. A good poem would still be a good poem if the author was unknown. If it should suddenly be discovered that the sonnets attributed to Shakespeare were written by someone else, their value as sonnets would not be decreased. A poem lives because of its own inherent merit. It is the work itself that we must study, not the man who wrote it.

¹⁶ Denis Diderot, *The Paradox of Acting*, trans. W. H. Pollock (London: Chatto and Windus, 1883), p. 55.

¹⁷ See Richard O. Boyer, "Maestro on a Mountaintop," *The New Yorker*, April 15, 1950, p. 45.

We should note also that a poem is not merely the words we find printed in a book. It is more alive than that. It would go on living if the book were destroyed. The words are merely symbols of a meaning, and it is the *meaning* we want to get at. The poem is what the symbols stand for to a qualified reader, or rather to all the qualified readers who interpret it. "A poem," says René Wellek, "is not an individual experience or a sum of experiences, but only a potential cause of experiences."¹⁸

It is this potential cause of experience that we should try to discover. We should go back of the poet's words to the thoughts, moods, and impressions that moved him to creation, and then express with voice and action what the poet expressed only in words. In this way the interpreter may be as much an artist as the poet.

So much, then, for the function of poetry and the qualifications of one who would read it to others.

Preparation for reading poetry. How shall we proceed in preparing a poem for reading aloud? A good many of the steps in preparation have been explained in previous chapters. You must analyze the sentences to determine what they mean, noting which words are important to the thought and which are subordinate, how they are grouped into phrase units and the relation of these groups to each other, taking special notice of ellipsis and inverted word order. You must note the poet's attitude or intention toward each statement he makes, determining whether it is ironic, admonitory, descriptive, defensive, melancholic, and the like. A later chapter will discuss more fully the emotional quality of poetry. You must work out some method of making your oral reading vivid and moving for your hearers. You must consider the demands of the poem for a full sustained voicing of its lines. You must analyze the words, letter by letter, to determine their sound values and plan to pronounce them so that all these values will be realized. And you must study the formal elements of the verse, its rhyme and meter and tempo, and consider whether these metrical effects will need to be amplified or minimized when you read the poem aloud.

¹⁸ René Wellek, "The Mode of Existence of a Literary Work of Art," in R. W. Stallman (ed.), *Critiques and Essays in Criticism* (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1949), p. 218.

The first thing to do, however, is to read the poem through attentively, letting it do its work upon you, and getting all you can of the pleasure of first acquaintance. On most occasions this first impression will be the only one your hearers will get, though they will *hear* the poem and you are only *seeing* it on paper. Investigate at once all unfamiliar words and allusions and master their meaning and pronunciation. Then examine the thought content of the poem to discover its "plain sense." Just what does the poem say in literal prose? Reduce it to a brief paraphrase.

Analysis of "The Solitary Reaper." Let us illustrate with Wordsworth's "The Solitary Reaper," which you will find at the end of this chapter. Your paraphrase will read something like this:

Look at that hill girl harvesting grain all alone and singing a sad song. Either stop, or go by quietly. Listen! The valley is full of her song.

It is more welcome than a nightingale's song to tired travelers in some oasis in the Arabian desert. It is more thrilling than a cuckoo's song in the quiet Hebrides islands.

What is she singing about? Maybe for some long past troubles; or maybe for some recent difficulty that might occur again.

Anyhow she sang as if she would never stop. I saw her, and listened without moving. And as I went on up the hill I remembered her song.

This seems unpromising stuff for poetry, but Wordsworth has made of it a poem that has delighted thousands of readers for a hundred years and more. What values can be found in it that will delight you, and that can be communicated to your hearers?

The incident related is simple enough, though you may never have had a comparable experience. Perhaps Wordsworth hadn't either. He may have invented it all. But the incident and the scene can easily be imagined. Take all the details he has given you and try to re-create the scene as vividly as he did. The language too is simple. There is no word that will trouble you except possibly the reference to the Hebrides. These, your geographical dictionary will tell you, are a group of barren islands off the northwest coast of Scotland. To an Englishman they carry the connotation of remoteness. The two birds referred to are, unfortunately, not native to America, and we can only imagine what their song was like. You have probably not visited Arabia, but again you can readily imagine how welcome would be a bird and shade to travelers across desert

sands. And though you may never have seen anyone reaping with a hand sickle, the scene is easily enough pictured.

The sentence form is also simple. There are no troublesome ellipses, inversions, or condensations, and the phrases are so clear and uncomplicated that a child can grasp them. The meter flows along smoothly and the rhymes are frequent and regular, so much so that an uncritical reader may yield too much to them and create mere singsong. There are no brilliant metaphors—none at all except such threadbare ones as have long since lost their metaphorical meaning—the vale “overflowing” with sound, the bird’s song “breaking” the silence, the numbers “flowing.” (Be sure you understand the meaning of “numbers” here; it has nothing to do with mathematics.) The language is remarkably literal for a poem so moving. There are not even any vivid descriptions, either of the girl or of her song, though the poet does give attention to the effect of the song.

That is, we seem to have here a poem that is lacking in all the usual characteristics of poetry. Of what, then, does its effectiveness consist? What are the poetic values that we must try to communicate to our hearers as we read it?

Indefiniteness of the poet’s impression. Let us note first what it is about this Highland girl that impresses the poet as he comes upon her suddenly in this isolated valley. It is apparent that he is deeply moved, but with what feeling? Is he delighted? Startled? Awestruck? Surprised? If he had put his feeling into one adjective, what would it be? Behold her! Isn’t she—what? Beautiful? Charming? Odd? Industrious? Courageous? Graceful? Romantic? The adjective is not there. You will not find it anywhere in the poem. If you will note in the title the word “solitary,” and in the first stanza the words, “single,” “solitary,” “by herself,” and “alone,” it will be apparent that he is impressed by her aloneness. But how is he impressed by it? He doesn’t say. Here is one of the vaguenesses or ambiguities characteristic of much good poetry. We are given the essential details of the scene—the Highland girl, alone, reaping and singing, cutting and binding the grain as she sings a melancholy song—and we form our own impression. In your interpretation of the poem, then, give your hearers the details in a clear sympathetic voice and trust them to be moved as the poet intended.

The rest of the poem is mostly about the song, but there too a specific description is lacking. The poet deals chiefly with the effect of the song. We are told only that it is "melancholy" and "plaintive," and that he finds it "welcome" and "thrilling." He compares it to the songs of birds, and speculates as to its theme. Note that the questions in the third stanza are merely speculations; do not read them as if you were asking for information. In the last stanza are several prosy lines that do not help at all to carry the feeling of the poem. "I saw her singing at her work" is about as literal and unpoetic a line as you are likely to find in good poetry. But in reading it you must not let it sound like prose. Try to maintain here the feeling and intensity created by the rest of the poem.

Since this poem can hardly be said to contain any deep philosophical thought, any penetrating insight into nature, any brilliant flights of imagination, or even any vivid descriptions of persons or things, we must look elsewhere for the sources of its poetic effects. Certainly a large part of its effectiveness depends upon the choice and arrangements of the words, upon their sounds and their connotations, both singly and in combination. Though the language is simple and familiar, the wording is distinctive and somehow right. To test this, try to alter the wording without destroying the poetic quality of the lines. Instead of "Behold her, single in the field," try this wording: "Regard her in the field alone." Instead of "Breaking the silence of the seas/ Among the farthest Hebrides," try "Disturbing the ocean quiet in remote northern islands." Or in what is probably the best-known and best-loved line of the poem, "For old, unhappy, far-off things," try the effect of merely changing the word order: "For far-off, old, unhappy things," or "For unhappy, far-off, old things."

Is it not apparent that any alteration in the language destroys the poetry? The tone and feel of the lines, their essential meaning, is lost if the wording is changed. Here is a demonstration that good poetry cannot be translated, for the essential poetry of the lines lies in the sounds of the words, in their arrangement and their relation to each other. What they suggest to us depends partly, perhaps largely, upon the pattern they form. A part of this pattern is the rhythm which their arrangement creates, and the rhymes.

In your oral reading of the poem you must give careful attention to these subtle "sound effects" and the more or less vague sugges-

tions of meaning and feeling that arise from them. These suggestions will vary among your readers, and none may feel the poem in quite the same way that you do. Some will be more susceptible to the literal ideas, some to the emotions, some to the images, and some to the sounds of the words and the meter; but there should be a universal effect which is substantially the same for all. The fact of individual differences and susceptibilities should not encourage you to give the poem an individual interpretation which expresses merely your personal reactions to the stimuli. It should rather encourage you to give full value to all the stimuli the poem contains so that each individual listener can respond according to his own natural bent.

The mood of the poem. Though Wordsworth does not define his feeling as he recalls this incident of his travels, he does not leave us in any serious doubt about it. The sight of this girl and the sound of her song formed a "welcome" interlude in his journey, and he cherished the experience long after he had passed on up the hill. It was, of course, a pleasant experience. Prevailing through it is a kind of wonder, not sharply defined. But that sort of experience is common to all of us. We are struck by something we see and we exclaim, "Just look at that. Isn't that a picture!" without defining, or being able to define, just how we are impressed. Such vague moods in poetry are not the less moving; indeed they may be more moving because they are not sharply delineated. Quite naturally we ask what a poem means in order that we may know how we ought to feel about it. But here the "meaning," whatever it is, will not help us. We might note a statement by T. S. Eliot that the chief use of "meaning" in some poetry is "to satisfy one habit of the reader, to keep his mind diverted and quiet, while the poem does its work upon him: much as the imaginary burglar is always provided with a bit of nice meat for the house-dog." A poem of this kind may be said to burglarize the reader through its mood. Or, to put it another way, the mood is in large part the meaning.

In a lyric poem the mood is nearly always constant and continuous from beginning to end. In "The Solitary Reaper," the mood, which we may characterize as a kind of pleasant contemplative wonder, must be established at the very beginning of the poem and maintained consistently to the end. Do not be diverted from it by

the poet's aside to his companion, "Stop here, or gently pass!" Or by the question "Will no one tell me what she sings?" This is not really a question; the poet is wondering, since she probably sang in a language he did not understand, what her song may be about. And do not suppose that the melancholy of the girl's song must induce a like melancholy in the poet. The contemplation of melancholy can be pleasant. As Shelley said, "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought." The mood should be established on the very first word "Behold." Do not be afraid of this word. Speak it firmly, with round full voice. Dwell upon it, and make the most of the possibility of lingering also on the word "single," a word which first informs us of what was so impressive about this Highland girl. If you get the proper mood established in this first line you should have little difficulty in maintaining it.

Tempo. One of the most important elements in the effect of a poem on those who hear it read is its tempo, the rate at which it moves. Some verses are intended to gallop, others to move along as slowly as a funeral procession. It will not do to give one the tempo of the other. A great deal of our best poetry is characterized by a mood of resigned romantic melancholy, often a melancholy that seems to be enjoyed for its own sake. Such poetry must be read with measured deliberation. To hurry it is to destroy it. Time is needed for the images to take form and the mood to establish itself, for images, mood, and meaning are all one and cannot be isolated from each other. Such lines must be lingered over, caressed lovingly with the voice, and uttered with an almost level intonation. To speak them with the crisp tones of sprightly conversation is to destroy them utterly. Avoid also making the lines choppy by cutting them up into separate phrases with pauses between. Such poetry should have the sustained even fluidity of song, what musicians call a *sostenuto* quality, all the syllables held full length and tied together by a continuous unbroken flow of voice. In such reading you run the risk of monotony, but a certain amount of monotony may be desirable and will not be a *dull* monotony if your imagination is alert, if images are sharply visualized, and if your feeling is strong and genuine.

"The Solitary Reaper" is not melancholy in spirit, but it needs to be read in the manner just described. It should be read deliber-

ately, with sustained even voice, the successive sounds blended smoothly together. Above everything else avoid chopping the lines into pieces, as, "Alone—she cuts—and binds—the grain," or "For old—unhappy—far-off—things." Most of the lines are complete phrases and can be carried easily on one unbroken outflow of breath. There is no line that requires a pause within it, though there are several where a break is possible. In a few the thought runs on past the end of the line, and in these the voice should run on too. Try, for instance, to carry through the first three lines of the second stanza on one breath. Give full firm voice to all the accented vowels, and shape all the sounds of the words clearly. Two pairs of rhymes may trouble you. "Chaunt" and "haunt" were rhymes in Wordsworth's day, but not now, and many of us do not rhyme "again" with "pain." In these cases you will have to decide as best you can between pronouncing the words conventionally and violating the rhyme, or maintaining the rhyme by mispronouncing the words. Review what was said on this problem in the chapter on pronunciation, and consider your audience.

Summary. Needless to say, you can make this whole process come off successfully only when you reflect in your voice and behavior the feeling that moved the poet. And for both you and your audience the proper feeling can be generated only from the images of the poem and from its movement and meter and the sounds of the words. You must, then, both during preparation and while you are reading, keep your imagination active and alert so that the images are vividly realized.

Since listeners differ in their susceptibility to poetry, some being affected more by one element in it and some by another, the interpreter must take pains to present fully and adequately all of the elements of which it is composed, and not merely those to which he personally is most susceptible. To represent adequately the "plain sense" of a poem, to harmonize this with the demands of rhythm and rhyme without neglecting either, to give full value to the sounds of the words so that both their identity and their emotional overtones are clear, to make the images sharp and distinct and to allow oneself to be appropriately moved by them, and while doing this to create a harmonious whole, a unified work of art, demands a very high order of intelligence and a constant alert-

ness of mind during the process of reading. If you possess these intellectual qualities, and if besides you are one of those persons whom Shelley described as "of the most delicate sensibility and the most enlarged imagination," and if you utter the poem with a voice that has good quality and is flexible and responsive to all shades of meaning and feeling, you should be able to create, or re-create, a genuine work of art that will profit and delight your hearers.

PLAN OF STUDY

44. Silently read the poem through, noting what it says, its images, its mood, and its movement.

45. Read it aloud, giving full expression to all the sound values you are aware of.

46. After investigating unfamiliar words, references, and allusions, and unraveling any tangled grammatical constructions, reduce the poem to a prose paraphrase. Then read it aloud again with special attention to lines or phrases that seem notable for aptness or beauty of expression.

47. Analyze carefully its truth to nature in its descriptions, its metaphors, its expression of moods and feelings, and its statements of thought. Consider whether these elements are likely to have the same effect upon all qualified readers of the poem.

48. Try to accept uncritically any images, paradoxes, or flights of fancy that are not hopelessly obscure or fantastic, even though they cannot be reduced to cold logic, or seem nonsensical when they are.

49. Try to penetrate behind the poet's words to the experiences and impressions that stimulated him to write, and try to feel them as vividly as he did. Discover the prevailing mood of the poem, and note any changes of mood.

50. Practice reading the poem aloud with full expression of all its sound values. Maintain the proper mood and tempo and rhythm. Most lyric poems call for a sustained, even (but not level), continuous flow of voice.

CRITERIA

40. Did the reader, without trying to take the place of the poet, sympathetically identify himself with the poem's meaning and feeling—read it as if he had found in it an expression of his own thought and emotion?

41. Did he so read as to communicate the universal elements in the poem, avoiding all eccentricity and idiosyncrasy in his interpretation?

42. Did he seem sensitive to, appreciative of, the characteristic effects of the poem?

43. Did he seem to have penetrated into the essential meaning of the poem so that he re-created in himself the impressions that moved the poet?

44. Did he deliver the full values of the sounds of the words and the movement of the rhythm?

45. Did he feel and express the poem's mood, and did he maintain it consistently throughout?

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What is the proper effect or function of poetry?
2. Explain: "Art is imitation of nature."
3. How is poetry "an expression of the universal element in life"?
4. What importance have individual differences for the appreciation of poetry?
5. What is the difference between a genuine poet and one who is merely eccentric? In what sense may a genuine poet be "mad" or "inspired"?
6. Explain: "An accurate taste in poetry is an acquired talent."
7. Explain three qualifications for the appreciation of poetry and its interpretation to others.
8. How thoroughly should a reader know the poem he attempts to interpret?
9. What are the "sound effects" of poetry?
10. What is the relation of a poem's mood to its meaning?
11. What is the importance of tempo in reading a poem?

SELECTION FOR DRILL

THE SOLITARY REAPER

William Wordsworth

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain 5
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands 10
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird
Breaking the silence of the seas 15
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?—
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago: 20
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of today?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang 25
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;—
I listened, motionless and still;
And as I mounted up the hill 30
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

SELECTIONS FOR PRACTICE

THE INVISIBLE BRIDE *

Edwin Markham

The low-voiced girls that go
In gardens of the Lord,
Like flowers of the field they grow
In sisterly accord.

Their whispering feet are white
Along the leafy ways;
They go in whirls of light
Too beautiful for praise.

And in their band forsooth
Is one to set me free—
The one that touched my youth—
The one God gave to me.

She kindles the desire
Whereby the gods survive—
The white ideal fire
That keeps my soul alive.

Now at the wondrous hour,
She leaves her star supreme,
And comes in the night's still power,
To touch me with a dream.

Sibyl of mystery
On roads unknown to men,
Softly she comes to me,
And goes to God again.

HOLLYHOCKS †

Lew Sarett

I have a garden, but, oh, dear me!
What a ribald and hysterical company:
Incorrigible mustard, militant corn,

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† From *Wings Against the Moon*, by permission of Henry Holt & Co., publishers.

Frivolous lettuce, and celery forlorn;
 Beets apoplectic and fatuous potatoes,
 Voluptuous pumpkins and palpitant tomatoes;
 Philandering pickles trysting at the gate,
 Onions acrimonious, and peppers irate;
 And a regiment of hollyhocks marching around them
 To curb their mischief, to discipline and bound them.

*Hollyhocks! Hollyhocks! What should I do
 Without the morale of a troop like you!*

Some lackadaisically yawn and nod;
 Others, hypochondriac, droop on the sod:
 Cabbage apathetic, parsnips sullen,
 Peas downtrodden by the lancing mullein;
 Boorish rutabagas, dill exotic,
 The wan wax-bean, bilious and neurotic;
 Dropsical melons, varicose chard,
 And cauliflowers fainting all over the yard.
 Thank heaven for the hollyhocks! Till day is done
 They prod them to labor in the rain and the sun.

*Hollyhocks! Hollyhocks! Stiff as starch!
 Fix your bayonets! Forward! March!*

THE JOY OF THE HILLS *

Edwin Markham

I ride on the mountain tops, I ride;
 I have found my life and am satisfied.
 Onward I ride in the blowing oats,
 Checking the field-lark's rippling notes—
 Lightly I sweep
 From steep to steep:
 Over my head through the branches high
 Come glimpses of a rushing sky;
 The tall oats brush my horse's flanks;
 Wild poppies crowd on the sunny banks;
 A bee booms out of the scented grass;
 A jay laughs with me as I pass.

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I ride on the hills, I forgive, I forget
Life's hoard of regret—
All the terror and pain
Of the chafing chain.
Grind on, O cities, grind:
I leave you a blur behind.
I am lifted elate—the skies expand:
Here the world's heaped gold is a pile of sand.
Let them weary and work in their narrow walls:
I ride with the voices of waterfalls!

I swing on as one in a dream—I swing
Down the airy hollows, I shout, I sing!
The world is gone like an empty word:
My body's a bough in the wind, my heart a bird!

ACROSS THE FIELDS TO ANNE *

Richard Burton

How often in the summer-tide,
His graver business set aside,
Has stripling Will, the thoughtful-eyed,
As to the pipe of Pan,
Stepped blithesomely with lover's pride
Across the fields to Anne.

It must have been a merry mile,
This summer stroll by hedge and stile,
With sweet foreknowledge all the while
How sure the pathway ran
To dear delights of kiss and smile,
Across the fields to Anne.

The silly sheep that graze to-day,
I wot, they let him go his way,
Nor once looked up, as who should say:
"It is a seemly man."
For many lads went wooing aye
Across the fields to Anne.

* By permission of Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Co.

The oaks, they have a wiser look;
Mayhap they whispered to the brook:
"The world by him shall yet be shook,
It is in nature's plan;
Though now he fleets like any rook
Across the fields to Anne."

And I am sure, that on some hour
Coquetting soft 'twixt sun and shower,
He stooped and broke a daisy-flower
With heart of tiny span,
And bore it as a lover's dower
Across the fields to Anne.

While from her cottage garden-bed
She plucked a jasmine's goodlihed, e,
To scent his jerkin's brown instead;
Now since that love began,
What luckier swain than he who sped
Across the fields to Anne?

The winding path whereon I pace,
The hedgerow's green, the summer's grace,
Are still before me face to face;
Methinks I almost can
Turn poet and join the singing race
Across the fields to Anne!

THINGS *

Aline Kilmer

Sometimes when I am at tea with you,
I catch my breath
At a thought that is old as the world is old
And more bitter than death.

It is that the spoon that you just laid down
And the cup that you hold
May be here shining and insolent
When you are still and cold.

* From *Selected Poems*, copyright, 1929, by Doubleday & Co., Inc., and reprinted by their permission.

Your careless note that I laid away
 May leap to my eyes like flame,
 When the world has almost forgotten your voice
 Or the sound of your name.

The golden Virgin da Vinci drew
 May smile on over my head,
 And daffodils nod in the silver vase
 When you are dead.

So let moth and dust corrupt and thieves
 Break through and I shall be glad,
 Because of the hatred I bear to things
 Instead of the love I had.

For life seems only a shuddering breath,
 A smothered, desperate cry;
 And things have a terrible permanence
 When people die.

BLINDMAN'S BUFF *

Peter Viereck

Night-watchmen think of dawn and things auroral.
 Clerks wistful for Bermudas think of coral.
 The poet in New York still thinks of laurel.
 (But lovers think of death and touch each other
 As if to prove that love is still alive.)

The Martian space-crew, in an Earthward dive,
 Think of their sweet unearthly earth Up There,
 Where darling monsters romp in airless air.
 (Two lovers think of death and touch each other,
 Fearing that day when only one's alive.)

We think of cash, but cash does not arrive.
 We think of fun, but fate will not connive.
 We never mention death. Do we survive?
 (The lovers think of death and touch each other
 To live their love while love is yet alive.)

Prize-winners are so avid when they strive;
 They race so far; they pile their toys so high

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Only a cad would trip them. Yet they die.
 (The lovers think of death and touch each other;
 Of all who live, these are the most alive.)

Plump creatures smack their lips and think they thrive;
 The hibernating bear, but half alive,
 Dreams of free honey in a stingless hive.
 He thinks of life at every lifeless breath.
 (The lovers think of death.)

EVE *

Ralph Hodgson

Eve, with her basket, was
 Deep in the bells and grass,
 Wading in bells and grass
 Up to her knees.
 Picking a dish of sweet
 Berries and plums to eat,
 Down in the bells and grass
 Under the trees.

Mute as a mouse in a
 Corner the cobra lay,
 Curled round a bough of the
 Cinnamon tall. . . .
 Now to get even and
 Humble proud heaven and
 Now was the moment or
 Never at all.

"Eva!" Each syllable
 Light as a flower fell,
 "Eva!" he whispered the
 Wondering maid,
 Soft as a bubble sung
 Out of a linnet's lung,
 Soft and most silverly
 "Eva!" he said.

Picture that orchard sprite;
 Eve, with her body white,

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Supple and smooth to her
Slim finger tips;
Wondering, listening,
Listening, wondering,
Eve with a berry
Half-way to her lips.

Oh, had our simple Eve
Seen through the make-believe!
Had she but known the
Pretender he was!
Out of the boughs he came,
Whispering still her name,
Tumbling in twenty rings
Into the grass.

Here was the strangest pair
In the world anywhere,
Eve in the bells and grass
Kneeling, and he
Telling his story low. . . .
Singing birds saw them go
Down the dark path to
The Blasphemous Tree.

Oh, what a clatter when
Titmouse and Jenny Wren
Saw him successful and
Taking his leave!
How the birds rated him,
How they all hated him!
How they all pitied
Poor motherless Eve!

Picture her crying
Outside in the lane,
Eve, with no dish of sweet
Berries and plums to eat,
Haunting the gate of the
Orchard in vain. . . .
Picture the lewd delight
Under the hill tonight—
"Eva!" the toast goes round,
"Eva!" again.

READING ALOUD

BUICK *

Karl Shapiro

As a sloop with a sweep of immaculate wing on her delicate spine
 And a keel as steel as a root that holds in the sea as she leans,
 Leaning and laughing, my warm-hearted beauty, you ride, you ride,
 You tack on the curves with parabola speed and a kiss of goodbye,
 Like a thoroughbred sloop, my new high-spirited spirit, my kiss.

As my foot suggests that you leap in the air with your hips of a girl,
 My finger that praises your wheel and announces your voices of song,
 Flouncing your skirts, you blueness of joy, you flirt of politeness,
 You leap, you intelligence, essence of wheelness with silvery nose,
 And your platinum clocks of excitement stir like the hairs of a fern.

But now with your eyes that enter the future of roads you forget; the
 smoke

Where you turned on the stinging lathes of Detroit and Lansing at
 night

And shrieked at the torch in your secret parts and the amorous tests,
 But now with your eyes that enter the future of roads you forget;
 You are all instinct with your phosphorous glow and your streaking
 hair.

And now when we stop it is not as the bird from the shell that I leave
 Or the leathery pilot who steps from his bird with a sneer of delight,
 And not as the ignorant beast do you squat and watch me depart,
 But with exquisite breathing you smile, with satisfaction of love,
 And I touch you again as you tick in the silence and settle in sleep.

THE EXPRESS †

Stephen Spender

After the first powerful plain manifesto
 The black statement of pistons, without more fuss
 But gliding like a queen, she leaves the station.
 Without bowing and with restrained unconcern
 She passes the houses which humbly crowd outside,

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The gasworks and at last the heavy page
Of death, printed by gravestones in the cemetery.
Beyond the town there lies the open country
Where, gathering speed, she acquires mystery,
The luminous self-possession of ships on ocean.
It is now she begins to sing—at first quite low
Then loud, and at last with a jazzy madness—
The song of her whistle screaming at curves,
Of deafening tunnels, brakes, innumerable bolts.
And always light, aerial, underneath
Goes the elate meter of her wheels.
Steaming through metal landscape on her lines
She plunges new eras of wild happiness
Where speed throws up strange shapes, broad curves
And parallels clean like the steel of guns.
At last, farther than Edinburgh or Rome,
Beyond the crest of the world, she reaches night
Where only a low streamline brightness
Of phosphorus on the tossing hills is white.
Ah, like a comet through flames she moves entranced
Wrapt in her music no bird song, no, nor bough
Breaking with honey buds, shall ever equal.

THE WILD SWANS AT COOLE *

W. B. Yeats

The trees are in their autumn beauty,
The woodland paths are dry,
Under the October twilight the water
Mirrors a still sky;
Upon the brimming water among the stones
Are nine-and-fifty swans.

The nineteenth autumn has come upon me
Since I first made my count;
I saw, before I had well finished,
All suddenly mount
And scatter wheeling in great broken rings
Upon their clamorous wings.

* From *Collected Poems*, copyright, 1933, by The Macmillan Co. and used with their permission.

I have looked upon those brilliant creatures,
 And now my heart is sore.
 All's changed since I, hearing at twilight,
 The first time on this shore,
 The bell-beat of their wings above my head,
 Trod with a lighter tread.

Unwearied still, lover by lover,
 They paddle in the cold
 Companionable streams or climb the air;
 Their hearts have not grown old;
 Passion or conquest, wander where they will,
 Attend upon them still.

But now they drift on the still water,
 Mysterious, beautiful;
 Among what rushes will they build,
 By what lake's edge or pool
 Delight men's eyes when I awake some day
 To find they have flown away?

WHEN EARTH'S LAST PICTURE IS PAINTED *

Rudyard Kipling

When Earth's last picture is painted and the tubes are twisted and dried,
 When the oldest colours have faded, and the youngest critic has died,
 We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it—lie down for an aeon or two,
 Till the Master of All Good Workmen shall put us to work anew.

And those that were good shall be happy: they shall sit in a golden
 chair;
 They shall splash at a ten-league canvas with brushes of comets' hair;
 They shall find real saints to draw from—Magdalene, Peter, and Paul;
 They shall work for an age at a sitting and never be tired at all!

And only the Master shall praise us, and only the Master shall blame;
 And no one shall work for money, and no one shall work for fame,
 But each for the joy of the working, and each, in his separate star,
 Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the God of Things as They are!

* From *The Seven Seas*. Reprinted by permission of Mrs. George Bambridge and Doubleday & Co., Inc.

MAP OF MY COUNTRY *

John Holmes

A map of my native country is all edges,
The shore touching sea, the easy impartial rivers
Splitting the local boundary lines, round hills in two townships,
Blue ponds interrupting the careful county shapes.
The Mississippi runs down the middle. Cape Cod. The Gulf.
Nebraska is on latitude forty. Kansas is west of Missouri.

When I was a child, I drew it, from memory,
A game in the schoolroom, naming the big cities right.

Cloud shadows were not shown, nor where winter whitens,
Nor the wide road the day's wind takes.

None of the tall letters told my grandfather's name.
Nothing said, Here they see in clear air a hundred miles.
Here they go to bed early. They fear snow here.
Oak trees and maple boughs I had seen on the long hillsides
Changing color, and laurel, and bayberry, were never mapped.
Geography told only capitals and state lines.

I have come a long way using other men's maps for the turnings.
I have a long way to go.
It is time I drew the map again,
Spread with the broad colors of life, and words of my own
Saying, Here the people worked hard, and died for the wrong reasons.
Here wild strawberries tell the time of year.
I could not sleep, here, while bell-buoys beyond the surf rang.
Here trains passed in the night, crying of distance,
Calling to cities far away, listening for an answer.

On my own map of my own country
I shall show where there were never wars,
And plot the changed way I hear men speak in the west,
Words in the south slower, and food different.
Not the court-houses seen floodlighted at night from trains,
But the local stone built into housewalls,
And barns telling the traveler where he is
By the slant of the roof, the color of the paint.
Not monuments. Not the battlefields famous in school.

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But Thoreau's pond, and Huckleberry Finn's island.
I shall name an unhistorical hill three boys climbed one morning.
Lines indicate my few journeys,
And the long way letters come from absent friends.

Forest is where green fern cooled me under the big trees.
Ocean is where I ran in the white drag of waves on white sand.
Music is what I heard in a country house while hearts broke,
Not knowing they were breaking, and Brahms wrote it.
All that I remember happened to me here.
This is the known world.
I shall make a star here for a man who died too young.
Here, and here, in gold, I shall mark two towns
Famous for nothing, except that I have been happy in them.

THE DEATHLESS DREAM

Carl Sandburg

*From THE PEOPLE, YES, NO. 75 **

Hunger and only hunger changes worlds?
The dictate of the belly
that gnawing under the navel,
this alone is the builder and the pathfinder
sending man into danger and fire
and death by struggle?
Yes and no, no and yes.
The strong win against the weak.
The strong lose against the stronger.
And across the bitter years and the howling winters
the deathless dream will be the stronger,
the dream of equity will win.
There are shadows and bones shot with lights
too strong to be lost.
Can the wilderness be put behind?
Shall man always go on dog-eat-dog?
Who says so?
The stronger?
And who is the stronger?

* From *The People, Yes* by Carl Sandburg, copyright, 1936, by Harcourt, Brace & Co., Inc.

And how long shall the stronger hold on
 as the stronger?
 What will tomorrow write?
 "Of the people by the people for the people?"
 What mockers ever wrung a crop from a waiting soil
 Or when did cold logic bring forth a child?
 "What use is it?" they asked a kite-flying sky gazer
 And he wished in return to know, "What use is a baby?"
 The dreaming scholars who quested the useless,
 who wanted to know merely for the sake of knowing,
 they sought and harnessed electrodynamic volts
 becoming in time thirty billion horses in one country
 hauling with thirty-billion-horse-power
 and this is an early glimpse, a dim beginning,
 the first hill of a series of hills.

What comes after the spectrum?
 With what will the test-tubes be shaken tomorrow?
 For what will the acetylene torch and pneumatic chisel be scrapped?
 What will the international partnerships of the world laboratories track
 down next, what new fuels, amalgams, alloys, seeds, cross-breeds,
 unforeseen short cuts to power?
 Whose guess is better than anybody else's on whether the breed of
 fire-bringers is run out, whether light rays, death rays, laugh rays,
 are now for us only in a dim beginning?
 Across the bitter years and the howling winters
 the deathless dream will be the stronger
 the dream of equity will win.

ROSALIND'S MADRIGAL

Thomas Lodge

Love in my bosom like a bee,
 Doth suck his sweet;
 Now with his wings he plays with me,
 Now with his feet.
 Within mine eyes he makes his nest,
 His bed amidst my tender breast;
 My kisses are his daily feast,
 And yet he robs me of my rest.
 Ah, wanton, will ye?

READING ALOUD

And if I sleep, then percheth he,
 With pretty flight,
 And makes his pillow of my knee,
 The livelong night.
 Strike I my lute, he tunes the string;
 He music plays if so I sing;
 He lends me every lovely thing;
 Yet cruel he my heart doth sting—
 Whist, wanton, still ye! .

Else I with roses every day
 Will ship you hence,
 And bind you, when you long to play,
 For your offence.
 I'll shut my eyes to keep you in,
 I'll make you fast it for your sin,
 I'll count your power not worth a pin;
 Alas! what hereby shall I win
 If he gainsay me?

What if I beat the wanton boy
 With many a rod?
 He will repay me with annoy,
 Because a god.
 Then sit thou safely on my knee,
 And let thy bower my bosom be;
 Lurk in mine eyes, I like of thee.
 O Cupid, so thou pity me,
 Spare not, but play thee!

TO ALTHEA, FROM PRISON

Richard Lovelace

When Love with unconfined wings
 Hovers within my gates,
 And my divine Althea brings
 To whisper at the grates;
 When I lie tangled in her hair
 And fetter'd to her eye,
 The gods that wanton in the air
 Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round
 With no allaying Thames,
 Our careless heads with roses bound,
 Our hearts with loyal flames;
 When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
 When healths and draughts go free—
 Fishes that tinkle in the deep
 Know no such liberty.

When, like committed linnets, I
 With shriller throat shall sing
 The sweetness, mercy, majesty,
 And glories of my King;
 When I shall voice aloud how good
 He is, how great should be,
 Enlargèd winds, that curl the flood,
 Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
 Nor iron bars a cage;
 Minds innocent and quiet take
 That for an hermitage;
 If I have freedom in my love
 And in my soul am free,
 Angels alone, that soar above,
 Enjoy such liberty.

SHALL I, WASTING IN DESPAIR

George Wither

Shall I, wasting in despair,
 Die, because a woman's fair?
 Or make pale my cheeks with care,
 'Cause another's rosy are?
 Be she fairer than the day,
 Or the flowery meads in May!
 If she be not so to me,
 What care I how fair she be?

Shall my heart be grieved or pined,
 'Cause I see a woman kind?
 Or a well disposèd nature
 Joinèd with a lovely feature?

READING ALOUD

Be she meeker, kinder than
 Turtle dove, or pelican!
 If she be not so to me,
 What care I how kind she be?

Shall a woman's virtues move
 Me to perish for her love?
 Or her well deserving known,
 Make me quite forget mine own?
 Be she with that goodness blest
 Which may gain her name of best;
 If she be not such to me,
 What care I how good she be?

'Cause her fortune seems too high,
 Shall I play the fool, and die?
 Those that bear a noble mind,
 Where they want of riches find,
 Think what, with them they would do
 That without them dare to woo;
 And unless that mind I see,
 What care I how great she be?

Great, or good, or kind, or fair,
 I will ne'er the more despair!
 If she love me, this believe,
 I will die ere she shall grieve!
 If she slight me, when I woo,
 I can scorn, and let her go!
 For if she be not for me,
 What care I for whom she be?

THE GARDEN

Andrew Marvell

How vainly men themselves amaze,
 To win the palm, the oak, or bays,
 And their uncessant labours see
 Crowned from some single herb or tree
 Whose short and narrow-vergèd shade
 Does prudently their toils upbraid,
 While all flowers and all trees do close
 To weave the garlands of repose!

Fair quiet, have I found thee here,
And innocence, thy sister dear?
Mistaken long, I sought you then
In busy companies of men.
Your sacred plants, if here below,
Only among the plants will grow;
Society is all but rude
To this delicious solitude.

No white nor red was ever seen
So am'rous as this lovely green.
Fond lovers, cruel as their flame,
Cut in these trees their mistress' name;
Little, alas, they know or heed,
How far these beauties hers exceed!
Fair trees! wheres'e'er your barks I wound
No name shall but your own be found.

When we have run our passion's heat,
Love hither makes his best retreat.
The gods that mortal beauty chase,
Still in a tree did end their race:
Apollo hunted Daphne so,
Only that she might laurel grow;
And Pan did after Syrinx speed,
Not as a nymph, but for a reed.

What wond'rous life is this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head;
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;
The nectarine, and curious peach,
Into my hands themselves do reach;
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Ensnared with flowers, I fall on grass.

Meanwhile the mind, from pleasure less,
Withdraws into its happiness;—
The mind, that ocean where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find;
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds, and other seas,
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.

Here at the fountain's sliding foot,
 Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,
 Casting the body's vest aside,
 My soul into the boughs does glide:
 There, like a bird, it sits and sings,
 Then whets, then combs its silver wings,
 And till prepared for longer flight,
 Waves in its plumes the various light.

Such was that happy garden-state,
 While man there walked without a mate:
 After a place so pure and sweet,
 What other help could yet be meet!
 But 'twas beyond a mortal's share
 To wander solitary there:
 Two paradises 'twere in one,
 To live in paradise alone.

How well the skilful gard'ner drew
 Of flowers and herbs this dial new,
 Where, from above, the milder sun
 Does through a fragrant zodiac run,
 And, as it works, the industrious bee
 Computes its time as well as we!
 How could such sweet and wholesome hours
 Be reckoned but with herbs and flowers?

From L'ALLEGRO

John Milton

Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee
 Jest, and youthful Jollity,
 Quips and Cranks and wanton Wiles,
 Nods and Becks and Wreathèd Smiles,
 Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
 And love to live in dimple sleek;
 Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
 And Laughter holding both his sides.
 Come, and trip it as you go,
 On the light fantastic toe;
 And in thy right hand lead with thee
 The Mountain Nymph, sweet Liberty;
 And if I give thee honour due,

Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
 To live with her, and live with thee,
 In unreprieved pleasures free:
 To hear the Lark begin his flight,
 And singing, startle the dull night,
 From his watch-tower in the skies,
 Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
 Then to come in spite of sorrow,
 And at my window bid good-morrow,
 Through the Sweet-Briar or the Vine,
 Or the twisted Eglantine;
 While the Cock, with lively din,
 Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
 And to the stack, or the barn-door,
 Stoutly struts his Dames before:
 Oft listening how the Hounds and horn
 Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
 From the side of some hoar hill,
 Through the high wood echoing shrill:
 Sometime walking, not unseen,
 By Hedge-row Elms, on Hillocks green,
 Right against the Eastern gate
 Where the great Sun begins his state,
 Robed in flames and Amber light,
 The clouds in thousand Liveries dight;
 While the Ploughman, near at hand,
 Whistles o'er the Furrowed Land,
 And the Milkmaid singeth blithe,
 And the Mower whets his scythe,
 And every Shepherd tells his tale
 Under the Hawthorn in the dale.

.

Towered Cities please us then,
 And the busy hum of men,
 Where throngs of Knights and Barons bold,
 In weeds of Peace high triumphs hold,
 With store of Ladies, whose bright eyes
 Rain influence, and judge the prize
 Of Wit or Arms, while both contend
 To win her Grace whom all commend.
 There let Hymen oft appear
 In Saffron robe, with Taper clear,

And pomp and feast and revelry,
 With mask and antique Pageantry;
 Such sights as youthful Poets dream
 On Summer eves by haunted stream.
 Then to the well-trod stage anon,
 If Jonson's learnèd Sock be on,
 Or sweetest Shakespear, Fancy's child,
 Warble his native Wood-notes wild.
 And ever, against eating Cares,
 Lap me in soft Lydian Airs,
 Married to immortal verse,
 Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
 In notes with many a winding bout
 Of linkèd sweetness long drawn out,
 With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
 The melting voice through mazes running,
 Untwisting all the chains that tie
 The hidden soul of harmony;
 That Orpheus' self may heave his head
 From golden slumber on a bed
 Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
 Such strains as would have won the ear
 Of Pluto to have quite set free
 His half-regained Eurydice.

These delights if thou canst give,
 Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

From IL PENSEROSO

John Milton

—Sweet Bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
 Most musical, most melancholy!
 Thee, Chauntress, oft the Woods among
 I woo, to hear thy even-song;
 And, missing thee, I walk unseen
 On the dry smooth-shaven Green,
 To behold the wandering Moon,
 Riding near her highest noon,
 Like one that had been led astray
 Through the Heaven's wide pathless way,
 And oft, as if her head she bowed,
 Stooping through a fleecy cloud.

Oft, on a Plat of rising ground,
 I hear the far-off Curfew sound
 Over some wide-watered shore,
 Swinging slow with sullen roar;
 Or, if the Air will not permit,
 Some still removèd place will fit,
 Where glowing Embers through the room
 Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,
 Far from all resort of mirth,
 Save the Cricket on the hearth,
 Or the Bellman's drowsy charm
 To bless the doors from nightly harm.

Or let my Lamp, at midnight hour,
 Be seen in some high lonely Tower,
 Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
 With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
 The spirit of Plato, to unfold
 What Worlds or what vast regions hold
 Th' immortal mind that hath forsook
 Her mansion in this fleshly nook;
 And of those Dæmons that are found
 In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
 Whose power hath a true consent
 With Planet or with Element.
 Sometime let Gorgeous Tragedy
 In Sceptred Pall come sweeping by,
 Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
 Or the tale of Troy divine,
 Or what (though rare) of later age
 Ennobled hath the Buskined stage. . . .

Thus, Night oft see me in thy pale career,
 Till civil-suited Morn appear,
 Not tricked and frownced, as she was wont
 With the Attic Boy to hunt,
 But Kerchieft in a comely Cloud,
 While rocking winds are Piping loud,
 Or ushered with a shower still,
 When the gust hath blown his fill,
 Ending on the rustling Leaves,
 With minute drops from off the Eaves.
 And, when the Sun begins to fling
 His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring
 To archèd walks of twilight groves,

And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
 Of Pine, or monumental Oak,
 Where the rude Axe with heavèd stroke
 Was never heard the Nymphs to daunt,
 Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.
 There, in close covert, by some Brook,
 Where no profaner eye may look,
 Hide me from Day's garish eye,
 While the Bee with Honeyed thigh,
 That at her flowery work doth sing,
 And the Waters murmuring,
 With such consort as they keep,
 Entice the dewy-feathered Sleep.
 And let some strange mysterious dream,
 Wave at his Wings in Airy stream,
 Of lively portraiture displayed,
 Softly on my eyelids laid.

And as I wake, sweet music breathe
 Above, about, or underneath,
 Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
 Or th' unseen Genius of the Wood.

But let my due feet never fail
 To walk the studious Cloister's pale,
 And love the high-embowèd roof,
 With antic Pillars massy proof,
 And storied Windows richly dight,
 Casting a dim religious light.
 There let the pealing Organ blow,
 To the full-voiced Quire below,
 In Service high and Anthems clear,
 As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
 Dissolve me into ecstasies,
 And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.

And may at last my weary age
 Find out the peaceful hermitage,
 The Hairy Gown and Mossy Cell,
 Where I may sit and rightly spell,
 Of every Star that Heaven doth shew,
 And every Herb that sips the dew;
 Till old experience do attain
 To something like Prophetic strain.

These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
 And I with thee will choose to live.

SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT

William Wordsworth

She was a Phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight:
A lovely Apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair;
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn;
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A Spirit, yet a Woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin-liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A Creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A Being breathing thoughtful breath,
A Traveller between life and death;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of angelic light.

THREE YEARS SHE GREW

William Wordsworth

Three years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown;

This Child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A Lady of my own.

"Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse: and with me
The Girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

"She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the Storm
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

"The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

"And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run!
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm, and quiet scene;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.

TO AUTUMN

John Keats

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spare the next swath and all its twined flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozy hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barr'd clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river shallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-cricket sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

Chapter 10

IMAGINATION

The lunatic, the lover and the poet
Are of imagination all compact;
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold,
That is, the madman: the lover, all as frantic,
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:
The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.¹

Thus does Shakespeare have Duke Theseus expound the psychology of imagination as employed by the poet.

Wordsworth had in mind a different form of imagination when he proposed in his *Lyrical Ballads* "to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect." Whatever the form which the imagination may take, there can be no doubt that it is an essential element in poetry. Shelley, indeed, defined poetry as the "expression of the imagination." He had also a clear conception of the very great value of the imaginative faculty in matters outside the field of poetry, for he said further, "A man, to be greatly good, must

¹ *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act V, scene 1.

imagine intensely and comprehensively; he must put himself in the place of another and of many others; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own. The great instrument of moral good is the imagination; and poetry administers to the effect by acting upon the cause."²

It is not, however, only in morals that the gift of imagination is of value. There are many situations outside the province of ethics in which "one must put himself in the place of another." In all our social relations, in teaching, in politics, in business, a sympathetic insight into the "pains and pleasures" of others, their tastes and desires, likes and dislikes, is indispensable for the highest success. And imagination, though of a different kind, is essential also in the activity of the scientist and the inventor. If imagination serves these useful functions, it is surely worth cultivating; and if, as Shelley says, "poetry enlarges the circumference of the imagination," this is an additional inducement to the study of poetry.

Imagination in poetry. If we accept Wordsworth's statement that the composition of a poem begins with "emotion recollected in tranquillity," and becomes a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling," and T. S. Eliot's doctrine that the proper emotion is evoked in the reader when an "objective correlative," that is, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion, is presented, it would seem that emotion, and, we may add, all the other effects of poetry, depend entirely upon imaginative activity. The language of poetry consists largely of images and symbols. In them the poet expresses his thoughts and feelings and impressions, and through these symbols and images we readers re-create in ourselves thoughts and feelings and impressions similar to those of the poet.

There are various ways in which the imagination is appealed to in poetry. First, there are descriptions of things and events and persons and moods, often in very simple and seemingly unimaginative language. This is, in general, the method employed in "The Solitary Reaper," though the poem consists less of objective description than of imaginative suggestions of how the scene impresses the poet. Turn to de la Mare's "The Listeners" at the end of this chap-

² "A Defence of Poetry," in *Complete Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1930), VII, 136.

ter. Here there is little that is not literal description, granting, of course, the existence of the phantoms. There are no poetic flights, no striking metaphors, no figures of speech at all, one may say, except the *surging backward* of the silence when the plunging hoofs are gone. It is by the skilful choice of meaningful details and the careful selection of descriptive words that this mysterious incident is created and drenched in its supernatural atmosphere.

Secondly, sometimes a single, apt word or phrase will create an image that the poet wishes us to see:

Death lays his *icy hand* on kings (p. 152)

She was a *phantom* of delight (p. 287)

Boughs which *shake against* the cold (p. 392)

Full of sorrow and *leaden-eyed* despairs (p. 326)

Sometimes the image is more extended, and often it is a comparison, in the form of a simile or metaphor, which reveals some striking or hitherto unappreciated likeness between two objects, as when Shakespeare calls leafless boughs

Bare ruin'd choirs where late the sweet birds sang;

or when he has Macbeth compare conscience to a bed of torture:

Better be with the dead . . .

Than on the torture of the mind to lie

In restless ecstasy;

or when Matthew Arnold likens the world to

a darkling plain

Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,

Where ignorant armies clash by night.

The analysis of images. In examining a poetic figure you should note just what is being compared with what, and the nature of the similarities. In "Death lays his icy hand on kings" it is clear enough that death is being likened to a person with cold hands. In Shakespeare's sonnet quoted above, bare boughs are likened to empty choir-stalls in a ruined cathedral. In these examples the points of similarity are readily found. Sometimes, however, the similarities are only vaguely suggested. If you try to define the ways in which this world is like a confused battlefield, as suggested in Arnold's

figure in "Dover Beach," you will have considerable difficulty, you will encounter endless ambiguities, and you will probably destroy both the beauty and the "meaning" of the figure.

Poetry, as has often been said, is untranslatable. If we find a poet "difficult," it may be because we are looking for literal statements of fact such as we find in a news story, instead of accepting poetry for what it is—a complex of statement, image, and sound, which is meant to appeal more to the emotions and the imagination than to the intellect. Poets are often obscure, sometimes quite unnecessarily so, and if you fail to understand a poet's figures and images the fault may be his. If he does not employ material that ought to be familiar to a qualified reader, if his constructions are tortured and his references obscure, "if he permits himself to become the auto-intoxicated victim of his private verbal games," he may justly be considered at fault. But if you fail to appreciate a figure because you don't examine it attentively, because you are not receptive and open-minded toward it, because you do not listen to the sounds of the words and surrender to their effects, or because your present education does not cover some of the words and references that a reasonably cultured reader should understand, then the fault cannot be attributed to the poet.

You may ask, Why doesn't the poet say what he means instead of clouding his intention in a lot of figures? What we must understand is that often the figure *is* the meaning, and not merely an ornament used to decorate the meaning. In this respect poetic language is not essentially different from our daily speech. We seldom realize how much our ordinary talk consists of metaphors, and how untranslatable they often are. Try, for instance, to put into literal terms these common figures of everyday speech, to explain what they mean in nonfigurative language:

He put something over on me.

We patched up our quarrel.

This makes a hit with me.

Don't jump to conclusions.

We can't make the grade.

If you find it difficult to reduce these expressions to literal terms without sacrificing something of their economy, vividness, and

clarity, do not expect to have less difficulty with poetic figures. "A symbol cannot be expressed in any other terms," says a modern critic. "The expression is the symbol." And he quotes the poet Yeats as saying, "It is not possible to separate an emotion or a spiritual state from the image that calls it up and gives it expression."³

Neither is it possible to separate the essential meaning of a poetic passage from its *sound*. In studying the images and figures and descriptions of which poetry largely consists, and in interpreting them to our audience, we must be constantly aware of the sounds of the words in which they are presented and of the movement of the rhythm. It is essential in reading poetry, says I. A. Richards, "to give the words their full imagined sound and body. . . . Even before the words have been intellectually understood and the thoughts they occasion formed and followed, the movement and sound of the words is playing deeply and intimately upon the interests."⁴

The ambiguity of symbols. The precise effects of the sounds, and of the images themselves, will not be the same upon all hearers, because, as we have already noted, hearers differ in their susceptibilities, and images are ambiguous in their suggestions. William Empson, in analyzing the line, "Bare ruin'd choirs where late the sweet birds sang," has pointed out the great number of ways in which we may feel a similarity between boughs and choirs. Both are places in which to sing, places where the singers sit in rows; both are made of wood; the architectural detail of the church was derived from the forest; the stained glass windows may have the images of leaves and flowers; the walls of the abandoned building are grey like the winter sky; etc., and so "there is a kind of ambiguity" in not knowing which of these likenesses to hold most clearly in mind.⁵ Empson regards ambiguity not as the defect, but as the virtue, of poetry, since it affords richness of suggestion to the reader. (Ambiguity here means not that the meaning is doubtful or uncertain, but that there is more than one legitimate meaning.)

³ Donald Stauffer, *The Golden Nightingale* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1949), pp. 29, 31.

⁴ I. A. Richards, *Science and Poetry* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1926), p. 31.

⁵ See William Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (2d ed.; New York: New Directions, 1947), pp. 2-3.

It follows that some readers may be more influenced by one of these meanings, and some by another, but this fact need not throw us into confusion. The poet's medium of expression is words, and as was pointed out in an earlier chapter, words mean to us only what we have come to associate with them from our previous experience. Perhaps we never get from a poet's, or anyone else's, words the full and exact meaning of the one who speaks them, because no two people have had exactly the same experiences. We may indeed find that we have had no previous experience whatever with the poet's words. For instance, when Tennyson wrote, "The callow throstle lispeth," he had doubtless seen and heard young throstles and they seemed to him to lisp. But if to us, as is probable, *callow* and *throstle* are not familiar words, our imaginations will make scarcely any response to Tennyson's line.

But in general a poet's words and images do have meaning for us because we have had previous experience with them; and they arouse in us substantially the same associations and connotations that they arouse in others. All the best poetry speaks a universal language. We respond to Wordsworth's sonnet (see page 388) because we too have felt at times that worldly considerations are "too much with us," and that we neglect the beauties of nature. If we have not seen, we can at least imagine, a sea that "bares her bosom to the moon," and can even conceive some sort of image of "Proteus rising from the sea," and "hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn." The fact that one of us may think of the moon on Long Island Sound, and another on San Francisco Bay, or only of a lithograph of the moonlit sea, does not make any essential difference.

For the appreciation of such passages we are greatly aided by the photographs and paintings we have seen, the plays we have witnessed, and the sights and sounds with which we are familiarized through the phonograph, the radio, and the motion picture. Dwellers on inland plains who have never seen any large body of water may nevertheless visualize the restless to and fro of the waves, and even feel the mysterious power of the "unplumbed, salt, estranging sea."

The imagination works through suggestion. It should be noted that the poet in presenting a scene to us works by means of suggestion. He does not give us a complete and detailed description, a

photographic representation of a mood or scene or incident. Rather he seizes upon some salient detail, some essential characteristic, some typical form of an object, and by suggestion causes us to fill in the details with our own imaginations. "His lines," says Professor Winchester, "bring to our imagination . . . only those details in which the emotional power of the scene resides."⁶ He does this by selecting from the manifold elements of his subject those details which reveal it in its most typical form. He gives us the heart of a scene, the essence of an emotion. The poet's genius as a poet lies precisely in this ability to reveal to us the essential form or pattern or "gestalt" of an object. It is in this respect that he shows his skill as an imitator of nature.

Unfamiliar terms hinder imagination. This discussion of the nature and the materials of the poetic imagination suggests three major reasons why we may fail to respond to the poet's imagery. First, the words and phrases he uses may be so unfamiliar as to create no response in our minds. We must know his language. We cannot, of course, get much stimulation from German poetry unless we understand German. The best poets are often so widely read and so deeply experienced with life that their language has a richness beyond our experience. They refer to places and persons and things which we may never have heard of, or which, if we have heard their names, bring no clear image to our minds. When Keats, for instance, says in "The Eve of St. Agnes" that:

A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and kings.

and again, that Madeline slept:

Clasp'd like a missal where swart Paynims pray.

he is using images to which only the most erudite of his readers will respond. And when Shelley says that the Mediterranean lay dreaming:

Beside a pumice isle in Baiæ's bay.

he is carrying the average reader somewhat beyond his depth in geology and geography. If such passages are to give us more than

⁶ Caleb Thomas Winchester, *Principles of Literary Criticism* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1899), p. 134.

the vague pleasure we can derive from the mere sounds of the words, we must take some pains to discover their meaning.

It is a curious fact that many even of those that pretend to enjoy poetry are not willing to take the pains necessary to understand it. Content to ladle off a few vague emotional impressions they miss entirely that higher pleasure which comes from the discovery and the contemplation of its deep philosophical truths. In poetry, even more than in prose, you must acquire the habit of looking intensely at words, and assuring yourself of their meaning. You must allow no image to pass without a serious and earnest endeavor to re-create it in your own mind. Nothing short of this deserves the name of reading. If you merely pronounce the poet's words to your hearers, allowing them to gather from such a performance whatever meaning they can, you throw upon them a burden which is properly yours. You do not stir their imaginations or move them to any proper emotional response. Pronouncing words is not interpreting literature. The business of the interpreter is to interpret. Only as he catches the emotional and imaginative content (as well, of course, as the thought content) of his selection, only as his mind expands to contain its content, as his body warms to its emotion, and as his eye brightens to its imagery, will he succeed in stirring in his hearers those responses which constitute what we call appreciation of poetry.

Staleness and familiarity hinder imagination. A second reason why we often fail to respond to the poet's imagery is that it may be so trite and familiar as to stifle our response. This *may* be the fault of the poet, or it may be due merely to much repetition of very good poetry. Good poetry is full of surprises, even if it surprises us oftenest, as Max Eastman says, by telling us most exactly what we know. But this element of surprise is dulled and blurred if we have become too familiar with a poem. Then our problem is to win back the thrill of the first reading. The Bible contains some beautiful poetry, but to many persons brought up in the church it has become meaningless from much repetition. What a wonderful experience it would be for one of mature taste and sharp perception to come upon these beautiful passages for the first time! But, familiar to us from childhood, they pass over us without making the slightest impression, except like music to stir a few vague feelings. We even allow

our hymn writers to compose of religious stereotypes such a mixed metaphor as this:

Crown him with many crowns,
The Lamb upon his throne!

and we sing it in utter oblivion of its incongruousness.

The cure for such insensibility to meaning is to attempt to recapture the thrill that comes from a first reading of such passages. We must penetrate through the callus formed by endless repetition and get back to the meaning of the figure, the emotional significance of the scene. And at times we must resist the siren lure of mere rhythm and assonance, and examine a figure or a description with the critical eye of a bank cashier, and then, when the heart of the passage is understood, bring back the emotional significance by putting it again in its setting of verse and meter. Good interpretation demands the kind of plasticity which in a much higher degree must be possessed by actors. To feel and to communicate night after night the same passion of grief or rage or fear or love requires a quickness of imaginative response and a plasticity of mood that only the most gifted possess. Lacking such plasticity the only alternative is the less certain method of cold technique.

Test your ability to real-ize and vitalize such passages as these:

Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.
Thomas Gray

Tell me not in mournful numbers
Life is but an empty dream.
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth
me beside the still waters.

Psalm 23

Distraction and hurry hinder imagination. A third reason why we may miss the imaginative splendors of good poetry lies in the extravagant tempo of modern life. Bombarded constantly with a veritable hailstorm of sensations, our attention distracted continually from one thing to another, hurried at an ever accelerating pace from babyhood till old age, we become less and less suited for critical

contemplation and philosophical calm. For the appreciation as well as for the creation of art there is needed, besides quiet and leisure, a constant and long-continued environment, a milieu of settled and habitual surroundings, a warp of familiar custom and habit. Poetry must not be read in snatches. It is not, like billboard slogans, for him who runs to read. It has depths which no such cursory examination will reveal. It can best be appreciated in "that serene and blessed mood" which Wordsworth describes:

In which the affections gently lead us on,—
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

Or the reader may well take the advice of Milton's Thoughtful Man, *Il Penseroso*:

And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
And hear the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing;
And add to these retirèd leisure
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure;
But, first and chiefest, with thee bring
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheelèd throne,
The Cherub Contemplation.

In such a mood the reader should study his selection and prepare it for public rendition. First, of course, there must be painstaking examination of its thought, rhythm, and imagery. In de la Mare's "The Listeners," assigned for study at the end of this chapter, you must create a picture of a building, and do it from a very few details: a moonlit door, a turret, a leaf-fringed sill, a dark stair, and an empty hall. That is all you have to work with. If you are not careful you will miss some of these details, and if you hurry you will not get them integrated into a picture. The imagination works from mere suggestions, but it will not create the picture the poet

intended unless it first gets hold of all the suggestions he offers. Then again, you must create from a very few details the traveller's appearance, mood, and mission: he has just arrived on horseback, his horse eats hungrily of the forest grasses, he stands perplexed and still, he has grey eyes, he knocks on the door, then *smites* it a second time, then suddenly smites even louder, lifts his head, shouts his message, mounts, and plunges off into the silence. These details are meaningless until through long study you find a meaning for them. And so with the mysterious listeners, and the other elements of the poem.

When the picture is once formed, it must be dwelt upon until the re-creative power of the imagination suffuses all your avenues of expression with an emotional glow—manifest in your eye, your facial expression, your bodily tensions, and in the vibrations of your voice. You must be *possessed* by the spirit of the poem. The poet has been sometimes called a seer, a prophet, a philosopher, who by long contemplation penetrates to the heart of life, and reveals to us a permanent and ideal truth. The interpreter of poetry, as well as the interpreter of life—that is, the interpretative reader, as well as the poet himself—must have the ability to detach himself from the distractions of his environment, and dwell in rapt contemplation upon the object of his study. Only then can he appear before his audience with that imaginative responsiveness which makes his reading seem as real as if it were his own creation.

Expression depends upon impression. Expression is the outer response to the promptings of the imagination, the evidence of what the imagination is doing, and a manifestation to the observer's eye and ear of what the reader is experiencing. It is sometimes said that in oral reading "expression is always perfect," that is, that the reader's vocal and bodily behavior is an accurate reflection of what he thinks and feels and perceives while reading. These manifestations are too subtle and elusive to be clearly described in any elocutionary terminology, but they are readily perceived by an attentive observer. They are a dependable index of the reader's appreciation—much more dependable than anything he could write on an examination paper. It is this evidence of imaginative aliveness that is the chief mark of excellence in interpretation, and the chief criterion by which the reader's performance should be judged. It

cannot be achieved by any mechanical method of managing voice and gesture. It must come from within.

The lack of a specific technique for the interpretation of emotion and imagination is, to many students, disappointing and baffling. "Oh," you may say, "I see clearly what the poet is describing. I understand his emotion, and I feel it myself. The trouble is that my voice won't express it. I try to let myself go, but somehow I *don't* go. I don't have the necessary technique of expression."

The desire for a mechanical technique of expression is a common one; the imagination is such an intangible thing, but a gesture, a look, or a vocal slide is a device that we can understand and lay hold of. However, we must resign ourselves to the fact that no such technique is available. Our only recourse is to trust our imaginations to prompt the right expression, and our hearers' imaginations to re-create the right impression.

Let us notice the resources we have to work with in the communication of poetic values. We have first the words, the language, of the author. Second, we have our voices, our vocal expression. Third, we have visible action, facial expression, gesture. Each of these may be an effective instrument in moving an audience. Think of the thousands of persons who, sitting alone with a book, reading silently to themselves, have been thrilled by the adventures in Scott's novels, or moved to tears by the pathos of Dickens. *Ivanhoe* and *David Copperfield* are vividly re-created and excite as much feeling as if they were actual. Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*, *Portia*, and *Rosalind* are discussed and argued over as if they were real persons, and often by those who have never seen them on the stage. Indeed, the sight of these characters on the stage is often disappointing and irritating to those who have already formed their conception of them by reading the plays. Shakespeare's fairies can be clearly imagined as real when we only read about them, but when we see them represented by a group of hundred-and-twenty-pound girls bouncing about on a plank stage, they lose their identity as fairies and become merely performers.

Consider also the powerful effect of drama as presented only to the ear, with no stimulus to the eye, as in radio plays. By his radio drama of an invasion from Mars, Orson Welles threw many hearers into a state of actual terror. It is not likely that any such panic could have been created by a motion picture or stage play in which

the characters were visible. And it is questionable whether television is as powerful a dramatic medium as the radio alone. Scenes that we visualize for ourselves are generally more moving than those presented to us ready-made. We must learn to trust the imagination—our own, and our hearers’.

It is best, then, that we do not seek any tricks or devices of elocution to impress our audience. The author’s words alone are effective stimulants, and if we speak them with sympathetic appreciation of their values, they should be all the more effective. This appreciation will come from penetrating insight into meaning and mood, and vivid visualization of them while we are reading. We ordinary mortals, of course, can seldom, if ever, see as sharply as poets see, for we must allow, on the testimony of Plato, Aristotle, Shakespeare, and others of lesser note, that the poet has within him a supernatural sensitiveness, a kind of divine madness, that he is a seer, a prophet, an inspired being. He sees into things more deeply than ordinary folk, but only perhaps because he examines more minutely the outward forms of things. “Homer looks a great while at his thumb.” (See p. 50.) But if we do our best to visualize what the poet has indicated, we may expect to be moved in the appropriate way, and we may expect that our vision and our emotion will be communicated to our hearers.

There is ground for believing that technique in the teaching of all the arts is much overemphasized, and that what is needed for artistic expression is sharper vision, deeper feeling, keener intuition. Benedetto Croce, one of the most important of modern writers on aesthetics, says, “Feelings or impressions . . . pass by means of words from the obscure region of the soul into the clarity of the contemplative spirit. *It is impossible to distinguish intuition from expression* in this cognitive process. The one appears with the other at the same instant, because they are not two, but one.”⁷

Make sure, then, that you have done your best to understand the poet’s thought, to feel his emotion, to see his images, and your expression will be vivid. Beyond this it is hardly safe to go, except by the methods described in Chapter 4. Cicero has stated the matter well: “For every emotion of the mind has from nature its own

⁷ Benedetto Croce, *The Essence of Aesthetics*, trans. Douglas Ainslie (London: W. Heinemann, 1921), p. 21. See another quotation from this work on p. 118 above.

peculiar look, tone, and gesture; and the whole frame of man, and his whole countenance, and the variations of his voice, sound like strings in a musical instrument, just as they are moved by the affections of the mind." "For all the powers of action proceed from the mind, and the countenance is the image of the mind, and the eyes are its interpreters."⁸

Summary. Imagination is an essential element in poetry as it is a valuable one in most of life's activities. It has various forms, but in poetry it always works through suggestion, never by the literal photographic representation of objects. We must re-create a poet's images in our own minds out of images which we already possess.

Imagination is hindered by unfamiliar terms, when we allow them to pass without analysis; by triteness, when we neglect to revivify a too familiar passage; and by our lack of concentration and deliberation. The reader should be possessed by the spirit of his poem so that his hearers will be impressed with the genuineness of his imaginative response. Vivid and correct expression depends upon correct and vivid impression. It is a safe working thesis that expression is an accurate reflection of impression.

PLAN OF STUDY

51. Take time to examine carefully every imaginative suggestion the poet gives you, every description, every picture, every figure. Fill in the details of these suggestions until they are complete, real, and vivid. It may help to try making a pencil sketch of the more important pictures.

52. Draw upon all your past experience and reading for the enrichment of these pictures; try to re-create vividly all sense impressions suggested—sight, sound, touch, smell, taste.

53. Investigate immediately and thoroughly all unfamiliar terms and references. Do not be satisfied until you get as clear a picture as seems possible of every object mentioned, and try to understand the significance of every image, what it contributes to the poem. Do the same with the sound effects.

54. In every figure of speech note exactly the points of likeness in the objects compared. There may be several in each figure.

55. If after your analysis some ambiguity remains, be sure that the fault, if it is a fault, is the poet's, not yours.

⁸ Cicero *De oratore* iii. 57, 59.

56. Take pains to revivify any trite or overfamiliar terms and images. How would they impress you if seen for the first time?

57. When the poem is thoroughly understood seek a quiet place and surrender yourself to its spirit. Integrate all details into a coherent whole, a unity of mood and feeling and movement. Chant the poem aloud, giving full value to the sounds of the words and the movement of the rhythm, and abandon yourself to its emotion. In this private rehearsal don't be afraid to let yourself go. In public recitation recall as much as you can of this abandon while observing the restraints of good sense and good taste.

CRITERIA

46. Did the reader while he was reading seem to see the scenes and objects described or suggested by the poet?

47. Did he pass over unfamiliar or difficult images without seeming to visualize them?

48. Did he revitalize trite and familiar images?

49. Was there evidence in his voice and visible expression of complete absorption in the imaginative content of the poem? Was he possessed by the poet's vision? That is, was there clear indication of his imaginative response to what he was reading?

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. How does poetry depend on and use imagination?
2. To what extent is it possible and profitable to analyze the images of poetry?
3. What should be the reader's attitude toward ambiguity in poetry?
4. What factors may hinder a full appreciation of a poem's imaginative elements, and how may these hindrances be overcome?
5. How should your imagination function in preparing a poem for oral reading?
6. What mood and environment are most suitable for the study of poetry?
7. Discuss the relation of expression to impression.
8. By what means and to what extent should an interpreter supply aids to his hearers' imaginations?

SELECTION FOR DRILL

THE LISTENERS *

Walter de la Mare

"Is there anybody there?" said the Traveller,
Knocking on the moonlit door;
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses
Of the forest's ferny floor.
And a bird flew up out of the turret, 5
Above the Traveller's head:
And he smote upon the door again a second time;
"Is there anybody there?" he said.
But no one descended to the Traveller;
No head from the leaf-fringed sill 10
Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes,
Where he stood perplexed and still.
But only a host of phantom listeners
That dwelt in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight 15
To that voice from the world of men:
Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark stair,
That goes down to the empty hall,
Harkening in an air stirred and shaken
By the lonely Traveller's call. 20
And he felt in his heart their strangeness,
Their stillness answering his cry,
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,
'Neath the starred and leafy sky;
For he suddenly smote on the door, even 25
Louder, and lifted his head:—
"Tell them I came, and no one answered,
That I kept my word," he said.
Never the least stir made the listeners,
Though every word he spake 30
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house,
From the one man left awake:

* By permission of Henry Holt & Co.

Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
 And the sound of iron on stone,
 And how the silence surged softly backward,
 When the plunging hoofs were gone.

35

SUGGESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS: Be sure of the meaning of *champed*, *turret*, *cropping*. Make sure of the pronunciation of *forest*, *spake*, *ay*, *stirrup*, *hoofs*. Note carefully which are main details and which are subordinate. The main thread of the poem is in the narration of the traveller's actions and their results. Statements about the horse, the bird, various descriptive touches, etc., are subordinate. Don't be tricked by the verse or rhyme into emphasizing matter which is echoed or implied; such as "to the Traveller," in line 9; "where he stood," in line 12; all of line 14; "their strangeness, their stillness . . . leafy sky," lines 21-24.

Construct a clear picture of the scene. Visualize the building and its setting. How is the traveller dressed? in clothes of what period? How are the phantoms dressed? Visualize their grouping on the stair. Through what kind of window does the moonlight stream? Stained glass? Visualize the dark stair and empty hall. How do the phantoms react to the traveller's summons? What has brought him here? What is his relation to those within? Has he been here before? What is the promise he has made and kept? Interpret the gesture: "and lifted his head." Note that "suddenly" he "smote" the door. Why? He "plunged" off into the darkness. Why? In what mood did he speak? Gently, pleadingly, angrily, defiantly, sadly? After all these questions are solved there will remain a good deal of mystery—as the poet intended.

You will not be able to analyze the meter by conventional scansion. You should, however, be able to feel the recurrence of three surges of emphasis in each line, a surge sometimes spread over several syllables. You will add a delightful quality to the beauty of the verse if you articulate with deftness and precision all the light syllables sprinkled between these peaks of emphasis. Do not weaken the vowels too much in such lines as the 31st. The numerous syllables if delicately articulated suggest the re-echoing of the rider's knocking through the deserted halls. Make the most of the long vowels in such lines as the 17th.

The prevailing mood is of mystery. There is no point in trying to read into the poem an allegory. Give us the picture drenched in mysterious moonlight, and leave it with us. The picture is enjoyable for its own sake, without being tagged with a moral. Compare the poem with Browning's "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came."

SELECTIONS FOR PRACTICE

From PARADISE LOST

John Milton

Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, Heavenly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed
In the beginning how the heavens and earth
Rose out of Chaos: or, if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rime.
And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss,
And mad'st it pregnant; what in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support;
That, to the height of this great argument,
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.

Say first—for Heaven hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of Hell—say first what cause
Moved our grand Parents, in that happy state,
Favoured of Heaven so highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and transgress his will
For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?
Th' infernal Serpent; he it was whose guile,
Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived
The mother of mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from Heaven, with all his host

Of rebel Angels, by whose aid, aspiring
To set himself in glory above his peers,
He trusted to have equalled the Most High,
If he opposed; and, with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God
Raised impious war in Heaven, and battle proud,
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition; there to dwell
In adamant chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.

Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded, though immortal. But his doom
Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes,
That witnessed huge affliction and dismay,
Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate.
At once, as far as Angels ken, he views
The dismal situation waste and wild:
A dungeon horrible on all sides round
As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames
No light; but rather darkness visible
Served only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed.
Such place Eternal Justice had prepared
For those rebellious; here their prison ordained
In utter darkness, and their portion set,
As far removed from God and light of Heaven
As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole.

From TINTERN ABBEY*William Wordsworth*

Five years have past; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a soft inland murmur.—Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
These hedgerows, hardly hedgerows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild: these pastoral farms,
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration:—feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,

In which the heavy and the weary weight
 Of all this unintelligible world,
 Is lightened:—that serene and blessed mood
 In which the affections gently lead us on,—
 Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
 And even the motion of our human blood
 Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
 In body, and become a living soul:
 While with an eye made quiet by the power
 Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
 We see into the life of things.

If this

Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft—
 In darkness and amid the many shapes
 Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
 Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
 Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—
 How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
 O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the woods,
 How often has my spirit turned to thee!

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
 With many recognitions dim and faint,
 And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
 The picture of the mind revives again:
 While here I stand, not only with the sense
 Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
 That in this moment there is life and food
 For future years. And so I dare to hope,
 Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
 I came among these hills; when like a roe
 I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
 Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
 Wherever nature led: more like a man
 Flying from something that he dreads, than one
 Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
 (The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
 And their glad animal movements all gone by)
 To me was all in all.—I cannot paint
 What then I was. The sounding cataract
 Haunted me like a passion; the tall rock,
 The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
 Their colours and their forms, were then to me

An appetite; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn, nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime,
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye, and ear,—both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognise
In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.

From INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY

William Wordsworth

I

There was a time when meadow, grove and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
 To me did seem
 Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.

It is not now as it hath been of yore;—
 Turn wheresoe'er I may,
 By night or day,
 The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

II

 The Rainbow comes and goes,
 And lovely is the Rose;
 The Moon doth with delight
 Look round her when the heavens are bare;
 Waters on a starry night
 Are beautiful and fair;
 The sunshine is a glorious birth;
 But yet I know, where'er I go,
 That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
 And while the young lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound,
 To me alone there came a thought of grief;
 A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
 And I again am strong:
 The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;
 No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
 I hear the echoes through the mountains throng,
 The winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
 And all the earth is gay;
 Land and sea
 Give themselves up to jollity,
 And with the heart of May
 Doth every Beast keep holiday;—
 Thou Child of Joy,
 Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy shepherd-boy!

IV

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call
 Ye to each other make; I see
 The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee:
 My heart is at your festival,
 My head hath its coronal,
 The fullness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.

Oh evil day! if I were sullen
While Earth herself is adorning,
 This sweet May-morning,
And the Children are culling
 On every side,
In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,
And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm:—
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
—But there's a Tree, of many, one,
A single Field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone:
 The Pansy at my feet
 Doth the same tale repeat:
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

v

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing Boy,
But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,
 He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

KUBLA KHAN: OR, A VISION IN A DREAM

A FRAGMENT

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.

So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossom'd many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced:
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momentarily the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reach'd the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
 In a vision once I saw:
 It was an Abyssinian maid,
 And on her dulcimer she play'd,
 Singing of Mount Abora.
 Could I revive within me
 Her symphony and song,
 To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
 That with music loud and long,
 I would build that dome in air,
 That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
 And all who heard should see them there,—
 And all should cry, Beware! Beware!—
 His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
 Weave a circle round him thrice,
 And close your eyes with holy dread,
 For he on honey-dew hath fed,
 And drunk the milk of Paradise.

APOSTROPHE TO THE OCEAN

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE, IV

Lord Byron

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
 There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
 There is society where none intrudes,
 By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
 I love not man the less, but Nature more,
 From these our interviews, in which I steal
 From all I may be, or have been before,
 To mingle with the Universe, and feel
 What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
 Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
 Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
 Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain
 The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
 A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
 When for a moment, like a drop of rain,
 He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
 Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths—thy fields
 Are not a spoil for him—thou dost arise
 And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
 For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
 Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
 And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray,
 And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
 His petty hope in some near port or bay,
 And dashest him again to earth—there let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
 Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
 And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
 The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
 Their clay creator the vain title take
 Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war—
 These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
 They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
 Alike the Armada's pride, or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
 Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
 Thy waters washed them power while they were free,
 And many a tyrant since: their shores obey
 The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
 Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou,
 Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—
 Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—
 Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
 Glasses itself in tempests: in all time,
 Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
 Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
 Dark-heaving;—boundless, endless, and sublime—
 The image of Eternity—the throne
 Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
 The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
 Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
 Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
 Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
 I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me

Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear,
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

THE CLOUD

Percy Bysshe Shelley

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,
From the seas and the streams;
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,
And their great pines groan aghast;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.
Sublime on the towers of my skiey bowers,
Lightning my pilot sits;
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,
It struggles and howls at fits;
Over earth and ocean, with gentle motion,
This pilot is guiding me,
Lured by the love of the genii that move
In the depths of the purple sea;
Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,
Over the lakes and the plains,
Wherever he dream, under mountain or stream,
The Spirit he loves remains;
And I all the while bask in heaven's blue smile,
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
And his burning plumes outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
When the morning star shines dead,
As on the jag of a mountain crag,
Which an earthquake rocks and swings,
An eagle alit one moment may sit
In the light of its golden wings.
And when sunset may breathe, from the lit sea beneath,
Its ardours of rest and of love,
And the crimson pall of eve may fall
From the depth of heaven above,
With wings folded I rest, on mine airy nest,
As still as a brooding dove.

That orbèd maiden with white fire laden,
Whom mortals call the moon,
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,
By the midnight breezes strewn;
And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof,
The stars peep behind her and peer;
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,
Like a swarm of golden bees,
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,
Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
Are each paved with the moon and these.

I bind the sun's throne with a burning zone,
And the moon's with a girdle of pearl;
The volcanoes are dim, and the stars reel and swim,
When the whirlwinds my banner unfurl.
From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,
Over a torrent sea,
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof,—
The mountains its columns be.
The triumphal arch through which I march
With hurricane, fire and snow,
When the powers of the air are chained to my chair,
Is the million-colored bow;
The sphere-fire above its soft colors wove,
While the moist earth was laughing below.

I am the daughter of earth and water,
And the nursling of the sky;
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores;
I change, but I cannot die.
For after the rain when with never a stain
The pavilion of heaven is bare,
And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams
Build up the blue dome of air,
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,
And out of the caverns of rain,
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb,
I arise and unbuild it again.

ODE TO THE WEST WIND

Percy Bysshe Shelley

I

O, wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O, thou,
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odours plain and hill:

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and preserver; hear, O, hear!

II

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning: there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

READING ALOUD

Of some fierce Mænad, even from the dim verge
 Of the horizon to the zenith's height
 The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge
 Of the dying year, to which this closing night
 Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
 Vaulted with all thy congregated might
 Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
 Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst: O, hear!

III

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
 The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
 Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,
 Beside a pumice isle in Baïæ's bay,
 And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
 Quivering within the wave's intenser day,
 All overgrown with azure moss and flowers
 So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou
 For whose path the Atlantic's level powers
 Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
 The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
 The sapless foliage of the ocean, know
 Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear,
 And tremble and despoil themselves: O, hear!

IV

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
 If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
 A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share
 The impulse of thy strength, only less free
 Than thou, O, uncontrollable! If even
 I were as in my boyhood, and could be
 The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
 As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed
 Scarce seemed a vision; I would ne'er have striven
 As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
 Oh lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
 I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

v

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!
And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O, wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

TO NIGHT

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Swiftly walk over the western wave,
 Spirit of Night!
Out of thy misty eastern cave,
Where all the long and lone daylight
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
Which make thee terrible and dear,—
 Swift be thy flight!

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,
 Star-inwrought!
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day;
Kiss her until she be wearied out,
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand—
 Come, long sought!

READING ALOUD

When I arose and saw the dawn,
 I sighed for thee;
 When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
 And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
 And the weary Day turned to his rest,
 Lingering like an unloved guest,
 I sighed for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
 Wouldst thou me?
 Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
 Murmured like a noontide bee,
 Shall I nestle near thy side?
 Wouldst thou me?—And I replied,
 No, not thee!

Death will come when thou art dead,
 Soon, too soon—
 Sleep will come when thou art fled;
 Of neither would I ask the boon
 I ask of thee, belovèd Night—
 Swift be thine approaching flight,
 Come soon, soon!

TO A SKYLARK

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Hail to thee, blithe spirit!
 Bird thou never wert,
 That from heaven, or near it,
 Pourest thy full heart
 In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

 Higher still and higher
 From the earth thou springest
 Like a cloud of fire;
 The blue deep thou wingest,
 And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

 In the golden lightning
 Of the sunken sun,
 O'er which clouds are bright'ning,
 Thou dost float and run;
 Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven,
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight,
Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.
All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.
What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see,
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.
Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:
Like a high-born maiden
In a palace-tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:
Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its ærial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view:
Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-wingèd thieves:

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass:
Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.
Chorus Hymeneal,
Or triumphal chaunt,
Matched with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt,
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.
What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?
With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.
Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?
We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.
Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am listening now.

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

John Keats

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk;
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happiness,—
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O, for a draught of vintage! that hath been
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O, for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stained mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;

Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
 Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
 Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
 And leaden-eyed despairs,
 Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
 Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
 But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
 Though the dull brain perplexes and retards;
 Already with thee! tender is the night,
 And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
 Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays;
 But here there is no light,
 Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
 Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
 But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
 Wherewith the seasonable month endows
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
 Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
 And mid-May's eldest child,
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
 The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
 I have been half in love with easeful Death,
 Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
 To take into the air my quiet breath;
 Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
 To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
 While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
 In such an ecstasy!
 Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
 To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
 No hungry generations tread thee down;
 The voice I hear this passing night was heard
 In ancient days by emperor and clown:

Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
 The same that oft-times hath
 Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
 To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
 Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
 As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf.
 Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
 Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
 Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
 In the next valley-glades:
 Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
 Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?

From THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

John Keats

Out went the taper as she hurried in;
 Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:
 She clos'd the door, she panted, all akin
 To spirits of the air, and visions wide:
 No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!
 But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
 Paining with eloquence her balmy side;
 As though a tongueless nightingale should swell
 Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.

A casement high and triple arch'd there was,
 All garlanded with carven imag'ries
 Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass.
 And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
 Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
 As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;
 And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
 And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
 A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and kings.

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
 And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
 As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;

Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for heaven:—Porphyro grew faint:
She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,
Of all its wreathèd pearls her hair she frees;
Uncclasps her warmèd jewels one by one;
Loosens her fragrant bodice; by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees:
Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,
In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay,
Until the poppièd warmth of sleep oppress'd
Her soothèd limbs, and soul fatigued away;
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day;
Blissfully haven'd both from joy and pain;
Clasp'd like a missal where swart Paynims pray;
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

Stol'n to this paradise, and so entranced,
Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress,
And listen'd to her breathing, if it chanced
To wake into a slumberous tenderness;
Which when he heard, that minute did he bless,
And breath'd himself: then from the closet crept,
Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,
And over the hush'd carpet, silent, stept,
And 'tween the curtains peep'd, where, lo!—how fast she slept.

Then by the bedside, where the faded moon
Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set
A table, and, half anguish'd, threw thereon
A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet:—
O for some drowsy Morpheap amulet!
The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,
The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarionet,

Affray his ears, though but in dying tone:—
The hall door shuts again, and all the noise is gone.

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,
In blanchèd linen, smooth, and lavender'd,
While he from forth the closet brought a heap
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd;
With jellies soother than the creamy curd,
And lucent syrups, tinct with cinnamon;
Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd
From Fez; and spicèd dainties, every one,
From silken Samarcand to cedared Lebanon.

These delicacies he heap'd with glowing hand
On golden dishes and in baskets bright
Of wreathèd silver: sumptuous they stand
In the retirèd quiet of the night,
Filling the chilly room with perfume light.—
“And now, my love, my seraph fair, awake!
Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite:
Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes' sake,
Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth ache.”

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,
For there were sleeping dragons all around,
At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears—
Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found.—
In all the house was heard no human sound.
A chain-drooped lamp was flickering by each door;
The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,
Flutter'd in the besieging wind's uproar;
And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall;
Like phantoms, to the iron porch they glide;
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,
With a huge empty flagon by his side:
The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,
But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:
By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide:—
The chains lie silent on the footworn stones;—
The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

And they are gone: ay, ages long ago
These lovers fled away into the storm. . . .

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

John Keats

Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?
Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!
Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,
For ever panting, and for ever young:
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.
Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands dressed?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?

And, little town, thy streets for evermore
 Will silent be: and not a soul to tell
 Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
 Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
 With forest branches and the trodden weed;
 Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
 As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!

When old age shall this generation waste,
 Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
 Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
 "Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"—that is all
 Ye know on earth and all ye need to know.

MORTE D'ARTHUR

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
 Among the mountains by the winter sea;
 Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
 Had fallen in Lyonness about their Lord,
 King Arthur: then, because his wound was deep,
 The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
 Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
 And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
 A broken chancel with a broken cross,
 That stood on a dark strait of barren land.
 On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
 Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
 "The sequel of to-day unsolders all
 The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
 Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
 They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we
 Shall nevermore, at any future time,
 Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
 Walking about the gardens and the halls
 Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
 I perish by this people which I made,—
 Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
 To rule once more—but let what will be, be,

I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn." . . .

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear, "Quick, quick!
I fear it is too late, and I shall die."

But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him, like a goad.
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armèd heels—
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, "Place me in the barge,"
And to the barge they came. There those three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud,
And dropping bitter tears against his brow
Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white
And colourless, and like the wither'd moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls—

That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd with dust;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shatter'd column lay the King;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere,
"Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?
For now I see the true old times are dead,
When every morning brought a noble chance,
And every chance brought out a noble knight.
Such times have been not since the light that led
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole Round Table is dissolved
Which was an image of the mighty world;
And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other minds."

And slowly answered Arthur from the barge:
"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?
I have lived my life, and that which I have done
May He within Himself make pure! but thou,
If thou shouldst never see my face again,
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seest—if indeed I go—
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
To the island-valley of Avilion;

Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
 Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
 Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns
 And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
 Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
 Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
 That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
 Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
 With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
 Revolving many memories, till the hull
 Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
 And on the mere the wailing died away.

SIR GALAHAD

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

My good blade carves the casques of men,
 My tough lance thrusteth sure,
 My strength is as the strength of ten,
 Because my heart is pure.
 The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
 The hard brands shiver on the steel,
 The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
 The horse and rider reel:
 They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
 And when the tide of combat stands,
 Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
 That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
 On whom their favours fall!
 For them I battle till the end,
 To save from shame and thrall:
 But all my heart is drawn above,
 My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine:
 I never felt the kiss of love,
 Nor maiden's hand in mine.
 More bounteous aspects on me beam,
 Me mightier transports move and thrill;
 So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
 A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns:
Then by some secret shrine I ride;
I hear a voice but none are there;
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
And solemn chants resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
I find a magic bark;
I leap on board: no helmsman steers:
I float till all is dark.
A gentle sound, an awful light!
Three angels bear the holy Grail:
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail.
Ah, blessed vision! blood of God!
My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory slides,
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
Thro' dreaming towns I go,
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow.
The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, springs from brand and mail;
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
And gilds the driving hail.
I leave the plain, I climb the height;
No branchy thicket shelter yields;
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.

READING ALOUD

I muse on joy that will not cease,
 Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
 Pure lilies of eternal peace,
 Whose odours haunt my dreams;
 And, stricken by an angel's hand,
 This mortal armour that I wear,
 This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
 Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
 And thro' the mountain-walls
 A rolling organ-harmony
 Swells up, and shakes and falls.
 Then move the trees, the copses nod,
 Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
 "O just and faithful knight of God!
 Ride on! the prize is near."
 So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;
 By bridge, and ford, by park and pale,
 All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
 Until I find the holy Grail.

DOVER BEACH

Matthew Arnold

The sea is calm to-night,
 The tide is full, the moon lies fair
 Upon the straits;—on the French coast the light
 Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
 Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
 Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
 Only, from the long line of spray
 Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd land,
 Listen! you hear the grating roar
 Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
 At their return, up the high strand,
 Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
 With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
 The eternal note of sadness in.
 Sophocles long ago
 Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
 Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow

of human
 must

Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

Chorus from ATALANTA IN CALYDON

Algernon Charles Swinburne

When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces,
The mother of months in meadow or plain
Fills the shadows and windy places
With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain;
And the brown bright nightingale amorous
Is half assuaged for Itylus,
For the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,
The tongueless vigil, and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying of quivers,
Maiden most perfect, lady of light,
With a noise of winds and many rivers,
With a clamour of waters, and with might;
Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,
Over the splendour and speed of thy feet;
For the faint east quickens, the wan west shivers,
Round the feet of the day and the feet of the night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing to her,
Fold our hands round her knees, and cling?
O that man's heart were as fire and could spring to her,
Fire, or the strength of the streams that spring!
For the stars and the winds are unto her
As raiment, as songs of the harp-player;
For the risen stars and the fallen cling to her,
And the southwest-wind and the west-wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,
And all the season of snows and sins;
The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that wins;
And time remember'd is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,
And in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

The full streams feed on flower of rushes,
Ripe grasses trammel a travelling foot,
The faint fresh flame of the young year flushes
From leaf to flower and flower to fruit;
And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,
And the oat is heard above the lyre,
And the hoofèd heel of a satyr crushes
The chestnut-husk at the chestnut-root.

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,
Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,
Follows with dancing and fills with delight
The Mænad and the Bassarid;
And soft as lips that laugh and hide,
The laughing leaves of the trees divide,
And screen from seeing and leave in sight
The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair
Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes;
The wild vine slipping down leaves bare
Her bright breast shortening into sighs;
The wild vine slips with the weight of its leaves,
But the berried ivy catches and cleaves
To the limbs that glitter, the feet that scare
The wolf that follows, the fawn that flies.

THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE

Algernon Charles Swinburne

Here, where the world is quiet;
Here, where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
In doubtful dreams of dreams;
I watch the green field growing
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest-time and mowing,
A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
And men that laugh and weep;
Of what may come hereafter
For men that sow to reap:
I am weary of days and hours,
Blown buds of barren flowers,
Desires and dreams and powers
And everything but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbour,
And far from eye or ear
Wan waves and wet winds labour,
Weak ships and spirits steer;
They drive adrift, and whither
They wot not who make thither,
But no such winds blow hither,
And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice,
No heather-flower or vine,
But bloomless buds of poppies,
Green grapes of Proserpine,
Pale beds of blowing rushes,
Where no leaf blooms or blushes
Save this whereout she crushes
For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
In fruitless fields of corn,
They bow themselves and slumber
All night till light is born;

READING ALOUD

And like a soul belated,
In hell and heaven unmated,
By cloud and mist abated
Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,
He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
Nor weep for pains in hell;
Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes;
And well though love reposes,
In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
With cold immortal hands;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than love's who fears to greet her
To men that mix and meet her
From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
She waits for all men born;
Forgets the earth her mother,
The life of fruits and corn;
And spring and seed and swallow
Take wing for her and follow
Where summer song rings hollow
And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,
The old loves with wearier wings;
And all dead years draw thither,
And all disastrous things;
Dead dreams of days forsaken,
Blind buds that snows have shaken,
Wild leaves that winds have taken,
Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,
And joy was never sure;
To-day will die to-morrow;
Time stoops to no man's lure;

And love, grown faint and fretful,
 With lips but half regretful
 Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
 Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
 From hope and fear set free,
 We thank with brief thanksgiving
 Whatever gods may be
 That no life lives forever;
 That dead men rise up never;
 That even the weariest river
 Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,
 Nor any change of light:
 Nor sound of waters shaken,
 Nor any sound or sight:
 Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
 Nor days nor things diurnal;
 Only the sleep eternal
 In an eternal night.

THE PLOWER *

Padraic Colum

Sunset and silence! A man: around him earth savage, earth broken;
 Beside him two horses—a plow!

Earth savage, earth broken, the brutes, the dawn man there in the
 sunset,
 And the Plow that is twin to the Sword, that is founder of cities!

"Brute-tamer, plow-maker, earth-breaker! Can'st hear?

"There are ages between us.

"Is it praying you are as you stand there alone in the sunset?

"Surely our sky-born gods can be naught to you, earth-child and earth-
 master?

"Surely your thoughts are of Pan, or of Wotan, or Dana?

* From *Poems*. By permission of The Macmillan Co.

"Yet, why give thought to the gods? Has Pan led your brutes where they stumble?"

"Has Dana numbed pain of the child-bed, or Wotan put hands to your plow?"

"What matter your foolish reply! O man, standing alone and bowed earthward,

"Your task is a day near its close. Give thanks to the night-giving God."

Slowly the darkness falls, the broken lands blend with the savage;
The brute-tamer stands by the brutes, a head's breadth only above them.

A head's breadth? Aye, but therein is hell's depth, and the height up to heaven,

And the thrones of the gods and their halls, their chariots, purples, and splendors.

HERITAGE *

Countee Cullen

What is Africa to me:
Copper sun or scarlet sea,
Jungle star or jungle track,
Strong bronzed men, or regal black
Women from whose loins I sprang
When the birds of Eden sang?
*One three centuries removed
From the scenes his fathers loved,
Spicy grove, cinnamon tree,
What is Africa to me?*

So I lie, who all day long
Want no sound except the song
Sung by wild barbaric birds
Goaded massive jungle herds,
Juggernauts of flesh that pass
Trampling tall defiant grass
Where young forest lovers lie,
Plighting troth beneath the sky.
So I lie, who always hear,
Though I cram against my ear

* From *Color*, by permission of Harper & Bros.

Both my thumbs and keep them there,
Great drums throbbing through the air.
So I lie, whose fount of pride,
Dear distress, and joy allied,
Is my somber flesh and skin,
With the dark blood dammed within
Like great pulsing tides of wine
That, I fear, must burst the fine
Channels of the chafing net
Where they surge and foam and fret.

Africa? A book one thumbs
Listlessly, till slumber comes.
Unremembered are her bats
Circling through the night, her cats
Crouching in the river reeds,
Stalking gentle flesh that feeds
By the river brink; no more
Does the bugle-throated roar
Cry that monarch claws have leapt
From the scabbards where they slept.
Silver snakes that once a year
Doff the lovely coats you wear,
Seek no covert in your fear
Lest a mortal eye should see;
What's your nakedness to me?
Here no leprous flowers rear
Fierce corollas in the air;
Here no bodies sleek and wet,
Dripping mingled rain and sweat,
Tread the savage measures of
Jungle boys and girls in love.

What is last year's snow to me,
Last year's anything? The tree
Budding yearly must forget
How its past arose or set—
Bough and blossom, flower, fruit,
Even what shy bird with mute
Wonder at her travail there,
Meekly labored in its hair.
*One three centuries removed
From the scenes his fathers loved,*

READING ALOUD

*Spicy grove, cinnamon tree,
What is Africa to me?*

So I lie, who find no peace
Night or day, no slight release
From the unremittent beat
Made by cruel padded feet
Walking through my body's street.
Up and down they go, and back,
Treading out a jungle track.
So I lie, who never quite
Safely sleep from rain at night—
I can never rest at all
When the rain begins to fall;
Like a soul gone mad with pain
I must match its weird refrain;
Ever must I twist and squirm,
Writhing like a baited worm,
While its primal measures drip
Through my body, crying, "Strip!
Doff this new exuberance.
Come and dance the Lover's Dance!"
In an old remembered way
Rain works on me night and day.

Quaint, outlandish heathen gods
Black men fashion out of rods,
Clay and brittle bits of stone,
In a likeness of their own,
My conversion came high-priced;
I belong to Jesus Christ,
Preacher of humility;
Heathen gods are naught to me.
Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
So I make an idle boast;
Jesus of the twice-turned cheek,
Lamb of God, although I speak
With my mouth thus, in my heart
Do I play a double part.
Even at Thy glowing altar
Must my heart grow sick and falter,
Wishing He I served were black,
Thinking then it would not lack

Precedent of pain to guide it,
 Let who would or might deride it;
 Surely then this flesh would know
 Yours had borne a kindred woe.
 Lord, I fashion dark gods, too,
 Daring even to give You
 Dark despairing features where,
 Crowned with dark rebellious hair,
 Patience wavers just so much as
 Mortal grief compels, while touches
 Quick and hot, of anger, rise
 To smitten cheek and weary eyes.
 Lord forgive me if my need
 Sometimes shapes a human creed.

*All day long and all night through,
 One thing only must I do:
 Quench my pride and cool my blood,
 Lest I perish in the flood.
 Lest a hidden ember set
 Timber that I thought was wet
 Burning like the dryest flax,
 Melting like the merest wax,
 Lest the grave restore its dead.
 Not yet has my heart or head
 In the least way realized
 They and I are civilized.*

DUST *

Rupert Brooke

When the white flame in us is gone,
 And we that lost the world's delight
 Stiffen in darkness, left alone
 To crumble in our separate night;

When your swift hair is quiet in death,
 And through the lips corruption thrust
 Has stilled the labor of my breath—
 When we are dust, when we are dust!—

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Not dead, not undesirous yet,
Still sentient, still unsatisfied,
We'll ride the air, and shine and flit,
Around the places where we died,

And dance as dust before the sun,
And light of foot, and unconfined,
Hurry from road to road, and run
About the errands of the wind.

And every mote, on earth or air,
Will speed and gleam down later days,
And like a secret pilgrim fare
By eager and invisible ways,

Nor ever rest, nor ever lie,
Till, beyond thinking, out of view,
One mote of all the dust that's I
Shall meet one atom that was you.

Then in some garden hushed from wind,
Warm in a sunset's afterglow,
The lovers in the flowers will find
A sweet and strange unquiet grow

Upon the peace; and past desiring,
So high a beauty in the air,
And such a light, and such a quiring,
And such a radiant ecstasy there,

They'll know not if it's fire, or dew,
Or out of earth, or in the height,
Singing, or flame, or scent, or hue,
Or two that pass, in light, to light,

Out of the garden higher, higher . . .
But in that instant they shall learn
The shattering fury of our fire,
And the weak passionless hearts will burn

And faint in that amazing glow,
Until the darkness close above;
And they will know—poor fools, they'll know!—
One moment, what it is to love.

THE MYSTIC *

Cale Young Rice

There is a quest that calls me,
 In nights when I am lone,
 The need to ride where the ways divide
 The Known from the Unknown.
 I mount what thought is near me
 And soon I reach the place,
 The tenuous rim where the Seen grows dim
 And the Sightless hides its face.

*I have ridden the wind,
 I have ridden the sea,
 I have ridden the moon and stars.
 I have set my feet in the stirrup seat
 Of a comet coursing Mars.
 And everywhere
 Thro' the earth and air
 My thought speeds, lightning-shod,
 It comes to a place where checking pace
 It cries, "Beyond lies God!"*

It calls me out of the darkness,
 It calls me out of sleep,
 "Ride! ride! for you must, to the end of Dust!"
 It bids—and on I sweep
 To the wide outposts of Being,
 Where there is Gulf alone—
 And thro' a Vast that was never passed
 I listen for Life's tone.

*I have ridden the wind,
 I have ridden the night,
 I have ridden the ghosts that flee
 From the vaults of death like a chilling breath
 Over eternity.
 And everywhere
 Is the world laid bare—
 Ether and star and clod—
 Until I wind to its brink and find
 But the cry, "Beyond lies God!"*

* By permission of the author.

It calls me and ever calls me!
 And vainly I reply,
 "Fools only ride where the ways divide
 What Is from the Whence and Why!"
 I'm lifted into the saddle
 Of thoughts too strong to tame
 And down the deeps and over the steeps
 I find—ever the same.

*I have ridden the wind,
 I have ridden the stars,
 I have ridden the force that flies
 With far intent thro' the firmament
 And each to each allies.
 And everywhere
 That a thought may dare
 To gallop, mine has trod—
 Only to stand at last on the strand
 Where just beyond lies God.*

FEUD *

Lew Sarett

Poor wayworn creature! Oh, sorely harried deer,
 What drove you, quivering like a poplar-blade,
 To refuge with my herd? What holds you here
 Within my meadow, broken and afraid?

Tilting your nose to tainted air, you thrill
 And freeze to wailing wolves! Fear you the sound
 Of the coyotes eager for a tender kill?
 Or yet the baying of the hunter's hound?

Let fall your anguish, harried one, and rest;
 Bed yourself down among your kin, my cattle;
 Sleep unperturbed. No spoiler shall molest
 You here this night, for I shall wage your battle.

There was a day when coyotes in a pack,
 Wolves of another hue, another breed,
 With Christ upon their lips, set out to track
 Me down and drop me, for my blood, my creed.

* From *Slow Smoke*, by permission of Henry Holt & Co.

Oh, hunted creature, once I knew the thud
Of padded feet that put you into flight,
The bugle-cry, suffused with lust for blood,
That trembled in the silver bell of night.

I knew your frenzied rocky run, the burst
Of lungs, the rivers of fire in every vein;
I knew your foaming lip, your boundless thirst,
The rain of molten-hammering in your brain.

Abide with me, then, against the wolves' return,
For I shall carry on the feud for you;
And it shall be, to me, of small concern
If the wolf-hearts walk on four soft feet or two.

Oh, let them come! And I shall burn their flanks
With a blast of hell to end their revelry,
And whistle molten silver through their ranks,
Laughing—one round for you, and one for me.

THE TUFT OF FLOWERS *

Robert Frost

I went to turn the grass once after one
Who mowed it in the dew before the sun.

The dew was gone that made his blade so keen
Before I came to view the leveled scene.

I looked for him behind an isle of trees;
I listened for his whetstone on the breeze.

But he had gone his way, the grass all mown,
And I must be, as he had been,—alone,

"As all must be," I said within my heart,
"Whether they work together or apart."

But as I said it, swift there passed me by
On noiseless wing a bewildered butterfly,

Seeking with memories grown dim over night
Some resting flower of yesterday's delight.

And once I marked his flight go round and round,
As where some flower lay withering on the ground.

* From *Boy's Will*, by permission of Henry Holt & Co.

And then he flew as far as eye could see,
And then on tremulous wing came back to me.
I thought of questions that have no reply,
And would have turned to toss the grass to dry;
But he turned first, and led my eye to look
At a tall tuft of flowers beside a brook,
A leaping tongue of bloom the scythe had spared
Beside a reedy brook the scythe had bared.
I left my place to know them by their name,
Finding them butterfly-weed when I came.
The mower in the dew had loved them thus,
By leaving them to flourish, not for us,
Nor yet to draw one thought of ours to him,
But from sheer morning gladness at the brim.
The butterfly and I had lit upon,
Nevertheless, a message from the dawn,
That made me hear the wakening birds around,
And hear his long scythe whispering to the ground,
And feel a spirit kindred to my own;
So that henceforth I worked no more alone;
But glad with him, I worked as with his aid,
And weary, sought at noon with him the shade;
And dreaming, as it were, held brotherly speech
With one whose thought I had not hoped to reach.
"Men work together," I told him from the heart,
"Whether they work together or apart."

THE BEAR *

Robert Frost

The bear puts both arms around the tree above her
And draws it down as if it were a lover
And its choke-cherries lips to kiss good-by,
Then lets it snap back upright in the sky.

* From *West Running Brook*, by permission of Henry Holt & Co.

Her next step rocks a boulder on the wall
(She's making her cross-country in the fall.)
Her great weight creaks the barbed-wire in its staples
As she flings over and off down through the maples,
Leaving on one wire tooth a lock of hair.
Such is the uncaged progress of the bear.
The world has room to make a bear feel free;
The universe seems cramped to you and me.
Man acts more like a poor bear in a cage
That all day fights a nervous inward rage,
His mood rejecting all his mind suggests.
He paces back and forth and never rests
The toe-nail click and shuffle of his feet,
The telescope at one end of his beat,
And at the other end the microscope,
Two instruments of nearly equal hope,
And in conjunction giving quite a spread.
Or if he rests from scientific tread,
'Tis only to sit back and sway his head
Through ninety odd degrees of arc, it seems,
Between two metaphysical extremes.
He sits back on his fundamental butt
With lifted snout and eyes (if any) shut,
(He almost looks religious but he's not),
And back and forth he sways from cheek to cheek,
At one extreme agreeing with one Greek,
At the other agreeing with another Greek
Which may be thought, but only so to speak.
A baggy figure, equally pathetic
When sedentary and when peripatetic.

MR. FLOOD'S PARTY *

Edwin Arlington Robinson

Old Eben Flood, climbing alone one night
Over the hill between the town below
And the forsaken upland hermitage
That held as much as he should ever know
On earth again of home, paused warily.

* From *Collected Poems*. By permission of The Macmillan Co.

The road was his with not a native near;
And Eben, having leisure, said aloud,
For no man else in Tilbury Town to hear:

"Well, Mr. Flood, we have the harvest moon
Again, and we may not have many more;
The bird is on the wing, the poet says,
And you and I have said it here before.
Drink to the bird." He raised up to the light
The jug that he had gone so far to fill,
And answered huskily: "Well, Mr. Flood,
Since you propose it, I believe I will."

Alone, as if enduring to the end
A valiant armor of scarred hopes outworn,
He stood there in the middle of the road
Like Roland's ghost winding a silent horn.
Below him, in the town among the trees,
Where friends of other days had honored him,
A phantom salutation of the dead
Rang thinly till old Eben's eyes were dim.

Then, as a mother lays her sleeping child
Down tenderly, fearing it may awake,
He set the jug down slowly at his feet
With trembling care, knowing that most things break;
And only when assured that on firm earth
It stood, as the uncertain lives of men
Assuredly did not, he paced away,
And with his hand extended paused again:

"Well, Mr. Flood, we have not met like this
In a long time; and many a change has come
To both of us, I fear, since last it was
We had a drop together. Welcome home!"
Convivially returning with himself,
Again he raised the jug up to the light;
And with an acquiescent quaver said:
"Well, Mr. Flood, if you insist, I might.

"Only a very little, Mr. Flood—
For auld lang syne. No more, sir; that will do."
So, for the time, apparently it did,
And Eben evidently thought so too;
For soon amid the silver loneliness

Of night he lifted up his voice and sang,
Secure, with only two moons listening,
Until the whole harmonious landscape rang—

“For auld lang syne.” The weary throat gave out,
The last word wavered; and the song being done,
He raised again the jug regretfully
And shook his head, and was again alone.
There was not much that was ahead of him,
And there was nothing in the town below—
Where strangers would have shut the many doors
That many friends had opened long ago.

LEPANTO *

G. K. Chesterton

White founts falling in the Courts of the sun,
And the Soldan of Byzantium is smiling as they run;
There is laughter like the fountains in that face of all men feared,
It stirs the forest darkness, the darkness of his beard;
It curls the blood-red crescent, the crescent of his lips;
For the inmost sea of all the earth is shaken with his ships.
They have dared the white republics up the capes of Italy,
They have dashed the Adriatic round the Lion of the Sea,
And the Pope has cast his arms abroad for agony and loss,
And called the kings of Christendom for swords about the Cross.
The cold queen of England is looking in the glass;
The shadow of the Valois is yawning at the Mass;
From evening isles fantastical rings faint the Spanish gun,
And the Lord upon the Golden Horn is laughing in the sun.

Dim drums throbbing, in the hills half heard,
Where only on a nameless throne a crownless prince has stirred,
Where, risen from a doubtful seat and half-attainted stall,
The last knight of Europe takes weapons from the wall,
The last and lingering troubadour to whom the bird has sung,
That once went singing southward when all the world was young.
In that enormous silence, tiny and unafraid,
Comes up along a winding road the noise of the Crusade.
Strong gongs groaning as the guns boom far,

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Don John of Austria is going to the war;
 Stiff flags straining in the night-blasts cold
 In the gloom black-purple, in the glint old-gold,
 Torchlight crimson on the copper kettle-drums,
 Then the tuckets, then the trumpets, then the cannon, and he comes.
 Don John laughing in the brave beard curled,
 Spurning of his stirrups like the thrones of all the world,
 Holding his head up for a flag of all the free.
 Love-light of Spain—hurrah!
 Death-light of Africa!
 Don John of Austria
 Is riding to the sea.

Mahound is in his paradise above the evening star,
 (*Don John of Austria is going to the war.*)
 He moves a mighty turban on the timeless houri's knees,
 His turban that is woven of the sunsets and the seas.
 He shakes the peacock gardens as he rises from his ease,
 And he strides among the tree-tops and is taller than the trees;
 And his voice through all the garden is a thunder sent to bring
 Black Azrael and Ariel and Ammon on the wing.
 Giants and the Genii,
 Multiplex of wing and eye,
 Whose strong obedience broke the sky
 When Solomon was king.

They rush in red and purple from the red clouds of the morn,
 From the temples where the yellow gods shut up their eyes in scorn;
 They rise in green robes roaring from the green hells of the sea
 Where fallen skies and evil hues and eyeless creatures be,
 On them the sea-valves cluster and the gray sea-forests curl,
 Splashed with a splendid sickness, the sickness of the pearl;
 They swell in sapphire smoke out of the blue cracks of the ground,—
 They gather and they wonder and give worship to Mahound.
 And he saith, "Break up the mountains where the hermit-folk can hide,
 And sift the red and silver sands lest bone of saint abide,
 And chase the Giaours flying night and day, not giving rest,
 For that which was our trouble comes again out of the west.
 We have set the seal of Solomon on all things under sun,
 Of knowledge and of sorrow and endurance of things done.
 But a noise is in the mountains, in the mountains; and I know
 That voice that shook our palaces—four hundred years ago:
 It is he that saith not 'Kismet'; it is he that knows not Fate;
 It is Richard, it is Raymond, it is Godfrey at the gate!

It is he whose loss is laughter when he counts the wager worth,
Put down your feet upon him, that our peace be on the earth."

For he heard drums groaning and he heard guns jar,

(*Don John of Austria is going to the war.*)

Sudden and still—hurrah!

Bolt from Iberia!

Don John of Austria

Is gone by Alcalar.

St. Michael's on his Mountain in the sea-roads of the north

(*Don John of Austria is girt and going forth.*)

Where the gray seas glitter and the sharp tides shift

And the sea-folk labor and the red sails lift.

He shakes his lance of iron and he claps his wings of stone;

The noise is gone through Normandy; the noise is gone alone;

The North is full of tangled things and texts and aching eyes,

And dead is all the innocence of anger and surprise,

And Christian killeth Christian in a narrow dusty room,

And Christian dreadeth Christ that hath a newer face of doom,

And Christian hateth Mary that God kissed in Galilee,—

But Don John of Austria is riding to the sea.

Don John calling through the blast and the eclipse,

Crying with the trumpet, with the trumpet of his lips,

Trumpet that sayeth *ha!*

Domino Gloria!

Don John of Austria

Is shouting to the ships.

King Philip's in his closet with the Fleece about his neck

(*Don John of Austria is armed upon the deck.*)

The walls are hung with velvet that is black and soft as sin,

And little dwarfs creep out of it and little dwarfs creep in.

He holds a crystal phial that has colors like the moon,

He touches, and it tingles, and he trembles very soon,

And his face is as a fungus of a leprous white and gray

Like plants in the high houses that are shuttered from the day,

And death is in the phial and the end of noble work,

But Don John of Austria has fired upon the Turk.

Don John's hunting, and his hounds have bayed—

Booms away past Italy the rumor of his raid.

Gun upon gun, *ha! ha!*

Gun upon gun, hurrah!

Don John of Austria

Has loosed the cannonade.

The Pope was in his chapel before day or battle broke,
(*Don John of Austria is hidden in the smoke.*)
The hidden room in man's house where God sits all the year,
The secret window whence the world looks small and very dear.
He sees as in a mirror on the monstrous twilight sea
The crescent of his cruel ships whose name is mystery;
They fling great shadows foe-wards, making Cross and Castle dark,
They veil the plumèd lions on the galleys of St. Mark;
And above the ships are palaces of brown, black-bearded chiefs,
And below the ships are prisons, where with multitudinous griefs,
Christian captives, sick and sunless, all a laboring race repines
Like a race in sunken cities, like a nation in the mines.
They are lost like slaves that swat, and in the skies of morning hung
The stair-ways of the tallest gods when tyranny was young.
They are countless, voiceless, hopeless as those fallen or fleeing on
Before the high Kings' horses in the granite of Babylon.
And many a one grows witless in his quiet room in hell
Where a yellow face looks inward through the lattice of his cell,
And he finds his God forgotten, and he seeks no more a sign—
(*But Don John of Austria has burst the battle-line!*)
Don John pounding from the slaughter-painted poop,
Purpling all the ocean like a bloody pirate's sloop,
Scarlet running over on the silvers and the golds,
Breaking of the hatches up and bursting of the holds,
Thronging of the thousands up that labor under sea
White for bliss and blind for sun and stunned for liberty.
Vivat Hispania!
Domino Gloria!
Don John of Austria
Has set his people free!

Cervantes on his galley sets the sword back in the sheath
(*Don John of Austria rides homeward with a wreath.*)
And he sees across a weary land a straggling road in Spain,
Up which a lean and foolish knight for ever rides in vain,
And he smiles, but not as Sultans smile, and settles back the blade . . .
(*But Don John of Austria rides home from the Crusade.*)

DEDICATION *

Rudyard Kipling

Beyond the path of the outmost sun through utter darkness hurled—
Further than ever comet flared or vagrant star-dust swirled—
Live such as fought and sailed and ruled and loved and made our world.

They are purged of pride because they died, they know the worth of
their bays;

They sit at wine with the Maidens Nine and the Gods of the Elder
Days—

It is their will to serve or be still as fitteth Our Father's praise.

'Tis theirs to sweep through the ringing deep where Azrael's outposts
are,

Or buffet a path through the Pit's red wrath when God goes out to war,
Or hang with the reckless Seraphim on the rein of a red-maned star.

They take their mirth in the joy of the Earth—they dare not grieve for
her pain—

They know of toil and the end of toil, they know God's Law is plain,
So they whistle the Devil to make them sport who know that Sin is vain.

And ofttimes cometh our wise Lord God, master of every trade,
And tells them tales of His daily toil, of Edens newly made;
And they rise to their feet as He passes by, gentlemen unafraid.

To these who are cleansed of base Desire, Sorrow and Lust and Shame—
Gods for they knew the hearts of men, men for they stooped to Fame—
Borne on the breath that men call Death, my brother's spirit came.

He scarce had need to doff his pride or slough the dross of Earth—
E'en as he trod that day to God so walked he from his birth,
In simpleness and gentleness and honour and clean mirth.

So cup to lip in fellowship they gave him welcome high
And made him place at the banquet board—the Strong Men ranged
thereby,

Who had done his work and held his peace and had no fear to die.

Beyond the loom of the last lone star, through open darkness hurled,
Further than rebel comet dared or hiving star-swarm swirled,
Sits he with those that praise our God for that they served His world.

* From *Departmental Ditties and Ballads and Barrack-Room Ballads*, reprinted by permission of Mrs. George Bambridge and Doubleday & Co., Inc.

SAILING TO BYZANTIUM *

W. B. Yeats

I

That is no country for old men. The young
In one another's arms, birds in the trees,
—Those dying generations—at their song,
The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas,
Fish, flesh, or fowl, commend all summer long
Whatever is begotten, born, and dies.
Caught in that sensual music all neglect
Monuments of unageing intellect.

II

An aged man is but a paltry thing,
A tattered coat upon a stick, unless
Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing
For every tatter in its mortal dress,
Nor is there singing school but studying
Monuments of its own magnificence;
And therefore I have sailed the seas and come
To the holy city of Byzantium.

III

O sages standing in God's holy fire
As in the gold mosaic of a wall,
Come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre,
And be the singing-masters of my soul.
Consume my heart away; sick with desire
And fastened to a dying animal
It knows not what it is; and gather me
Into the artifice of eternity.

IV

Once out of nature I shall never take
My bodily form from any natural thing,
But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make
Of hammered gold and gold enamelling
To keep a drowsy Emperor awake;
Or set upon a golden bough to sing
To lords and ladies of Byzantium
Of what is past, or passing, or to come.

* From *Collected Poems*, copyright, 1933, by The Macmillan Co., and used with their permission.

FOUR PRELUDES ON PLAYTHINGS OF THE WIND *

"The past is a bucket of ashes."

Carl Sandburg

1

The woman named Tomorrow
sits with a hairpin in her teeth
and takes her time
and does her hair the way she wants it
and fastens at last the last braid and coil
and puts the hairpin where it belongs
and turns and drawls: Well, what of it?
My grandmother, Yesterday, is gone.
What of it? Let the dead be dead.

2

The doors were cedar
and the panels strips of gold
and the girls were golden girls
and the panels read and the girls chanted:
 We are the greatest city,
 the greatest nation:
 nothing like us ever was.
The doors are twisted on broken hinges.
Sheets of rain swish through on the wind
 where the golden girls ran and the panels read:
 We are the greatest city,
 the greatest nation,
 nothing like us ever was.

3

It has happened before.
Strong men put up a city and got
 a nation together,
And paid singers to sing and women
 to warble: We are the greatest city,
 the greatest nation,
 nothing like us ever was.

* From *Smoke and Steel* by Carl Sandburg, copyright, 1920, by Harcourt, Brace & Co., Inc.

And while the singers sang
and the strong men listened
and paid the singers well
and felt good about it all,
 there were rats and lizards who listened
 . . . and the only listeners left now
 . . . are . . . the rats . . . and the lizards.

And there are black crows
crying, "Caw, caw,"
bringing mud and sticks
building a nest
over the words carved
on the doors where the panels were cedar
and the strips on the panels were gold
and the golden girls came singing:
 We are the greatest city,
 the greatest nation:
 nothing like us ever was.

The only singers now are crows crying, "Caw, caw,"
And the sheets of rain whine in the wind and doorways.
And the only listeners now are . . . the rats . . . and the lizards.

4

The feet of the rats
scribble on the doorsills;
the hieroglyphs of the rat footprints
chatter the pedigrees of the rats
and babble of the blood
and gabble of the breed
of the grandfathers and the great-grandfathers
of the rats.

And the wind shifts
and the dust on a doorsill shifts
and even the writing of the rat footprints
tells us nothing, nothing at all
about the greatest city, the greatest nation
where the strong men listened
and the women warbled: Nothing like us ever was.

LANDSCAPE AS A NUDE *

Archibald MacLeish

She lies on her left side her flank golden:
 Her hair is burned black with the strong sun:
 The scent of her hair is of rain in the dust on her shoulders:
 She has brown breasts and the mouth of no other country:

Ah she is beautiful here in the sun where she lies:
 She is not like the soft girls naked in vineyards
 Nor the soft naked girls of the English islands
 Where the rain comes in with the surf on an east wind:

Hers is the west wind and the sunlight: the west
 Wind is the long clean wind of the continents—
 The wind turning with earth: the wind descending
 Steadily out of the evening and following on:

The wind here where she lies is west: the trees
 Oak ironwood cottonwood hickory: standing in
 Great groves they roll on the wind as the sea would:
 The grasses of Iowa Illinois Indiana

Run with the plunge of the wind as a wave tumbling:

Under her knees there is no green lawn of the Florentines:
 Under her dusty knees is the corn stubble:
 Her belly is flecked with the flickering light of the corn:

She lies on her left side her flank golden:
 Her hair is burned black with the strong sun:
 The scent of her hair is of dust and of smoke on her shoulders:
 She has brown breasts and the mouth of no other country.

HEARING OF HARVESTS ROTTING IN THE VALLEYS †

W. H. Auden

Hearing of harvests rotting in the valleys,
 Seeing at end of street the barren mountains,
 Round corners coming suddenly on water,

* From *Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City*, by permission of Houghton Mifflin Co.

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Knowing them shipwrecked who were launched for islands,
We honor founders of these starving cities,
Whose honor is the image of our sorrow.

Which cannot see its likeness in their sorrow
That brought them desperate to the brink of valleys;
Dreaming of evening walks through learned cities,
They reined their violent horses on the mountains,
Those fields like ships to castaways on islands,
Visions of green to them that craved for water.

They built by rivers and at night the water
Running past windows comforted their sorrow;
Each in his little bed conceived of islands
Where every day was dancing in the valleys,
And all the year trees blossomed on the mountains,
Where love was innocent, being far from cities.

But dawn came back and they were still in cities;
No marvellous creature rose up from the water,
There was still gold and silver in the mountains,
And hunger was a more immediate sorrow;
Although to moping villagers in valleys
Some waving pilgrims were describing islands.

"The gods," they promised, "visit us from islands,
Are stalking head-up, lovely through the cities;
Now is the time to leave your wretched valleys
And sail with them across the lime-green water;
Sitting at their white sides, forget their sorrow,
The shadow cast across your lives by mountains."

So many, doubtful, perished in the mountains
Climbing up crags to get a view of islands;
So many, fearful, took with them their sorrow
Which stayed them when they reached unhappy cities;
So many, careless, dived and drowned in water;
So many, wretched, would not leave their valleys.

It is the sorrow; shall it melt? Ah, water
Would gush, flush, green these mountains and these valleys
And we rebuild our cities, not dream of islands.

A WALK ON SNOW *

Peter Viereck

1

Pine-trail; and all the hours are white, are long.
But after miles—a clearing: snow and roundness.
Such circle seemed a rite, an atavism,
A ripple of the deep-plunged stone of Myth.
I crossed that ring to loiter, not to conjure.
Stood in the center as in melodrama.
Wondered: if this center were a gate?
A gate from earth to non-earth? Gate where fingers,
Where rays perhaps, are fumbling signals through?
Or are stars cold for all their brightness,
Deaf to our urgencies as snowflakes are?
Then magic blazed: a star spoke through the gate:
“I am not cold; I am all warm inside.”

2

At once new longing charged and shook the air
Like spreading tremors of a storm's spilt moan.
Star-tunes lured old tellurian lonelineses.
Like chord-joined notes of one sky-spanning octave,
Orbs blent in universal tremolo.
“Star, star, reachable star!
Truly,” I called, “you are all warm inside.”
Shy through the gate came answer, frail in space:
“Good luck, brother. It's not so far across.”

3

Being absurd as well as beautiful,
Magic—like art—is hoax redeemed by awe.
(Not priest but clown, the shuddering sorcerer
Is more astounded than his rapt applauders:
“Then all those props and Easters of my stage
Came true? But I was joking all the time!”)
Art, being bartender, is never drunk;
And magic that believes itself, must die.

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My star was rocket of my unbelief,
 Launched heavenward as all doubt's longings are;
 It burst when, drunk with self-belief,
 I tried to be its priest and shouted upward:
 "Answers at last! If you'll but hint the answers
 For which earth aches, that famous Whence and Whither;
 Assuage our howling Why with final fact."

4

At once the gate slammed shut, the circle snapped,
 The sky was usual and broad and silent.
 A snowflake of impenetrable cold
 Fell out of sight incalculably far.
 Ring all you like, the lines are disconnected.
 Knock all you like, no one is ever home.
 (Unfrosted magicians freeze the whole night long;
 Holy iambic can not thaw the snow
 They walk on when obsessive crystals bloom.)
 Shivering I stood there, straining for some frail
 Or thunderous message that the heights glow down.
 I waited long; the answer was
 The only one earth ever got from sky.

SOME LINES IN THREE PARTS *

Peter Viereck

I

One tawny paw is all it takes to squash
 This owl who nests in brows his grounded stare.
 What ailed me from the arsenals of shape
 To rent so armorless a pilgrim's cape?
 And who am "I"? Were I all soul, I'd smash
 Through this poor pelt—through, out, no matter where,
 Just to wrench free one instant. Or else I'd hoot
 With hideous ululations—"let me out!"—
 Straight up at Such as cooped me here:
 "How did you get me into such a scrape?"

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II

But "I" being less than soul, of dustier plume,—
If I escape, it is myself I lose.
Great hooting flapping ruffled ego, close
Your hopeless wings again and bless aloud—
Seeing only song flits through—this slandered home,
This sweet snug roost built from such stinking trash.
Sing out its theme (there never was but one),
Throw back your head and sing it all again,
Sing the bewildered honor of the flesh.
I say the honor of our flesh is love.
I say no soul, no god could love as we—
A forepaw stalking us from every cloud—
Who loved while sentenced to mortality.
 Never to be won by shields, love fell
Oh only to the wholly vulnerable.

III

What hubbub rocks the nest? What panic-freighted
Invasion—when he tried to sing—dilated
The big eyes of my blinking, hooting fowl?
A cartilaginous, most rheumatic squeak
Portends (half mocks) the change; the wrenched bones creak;
Unself descends, invoked or uninvited;
Self ousts itself, consumed and consummated;
An inward-facing mask is what must break.
The magic feverish fun of chirping, all
That professorial squints and squawks indicted,
Is here—descends, descends—till wisdom, hoarse
From bawling beauty out, at last adores,
Possessed by metamorphosis so strong.
Then, with a final flutter, philomel—
How mud-splashed, what a mangy miracle!—
Writhes out of owl and stands with drooping wing.
Just stands there. Moulded, naked, two-thirds dead.
From shock and pain (and dread of holy dread)
 Suddenly vomiting.
Look away quick; you are watching the birth of song.

Chapter 11

EMOTION

Emotion in poetry. From the earliest times it has been recognized that a high emotional tension is a distinctive quality of poetry. The function of tragedy as Aristotle defined it was to relieve the emotions of pity and fear. Horace taught that one of the chief ends of poetry was to give pleasure. You may be familiar with Wordsworth's statement that poetry is "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling," originating from "emotion recollected in tranquillity." Poe said that "a poem deserves its title only inasmuch as it excites, by elevating the soul." Milton characterized poetry as sensuous and passionate. "It must never be forgotten," said Bliss Perry, "that poetry begins in excitement, in some body-and-mind experience."¹ John Masefield says that enchantment is the main function of poetry, and that it "has always to come from the excitement of the poet. Some aptitude or bias or special pleasure in the poet's mind determines the choice of his subject. Brooding upon the subject makes him see what opportunities it will give for the exercise of his chief power, whether that be for telling description, as in Chaucer, or for lyrical declamation, as in Shakespeare; but the effect of the poem will depend upon the measure of excitement which he can maintain."²

The effect of poetry has been variously described in modern times as causing goose flesh, bristling of the skin, taking off the top of the head, shivers down the spine, a sensation in the pit of the stomach, etc. And the modern critics, for all their attempts to redefine poetry and criticism, are still pretty generally agreed that poetry is primarily concerned with emotion. Yvor Winters calls a poem a statement "in

¹ Bliss Perry, *A Study of Poetry* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1920), p. 101.

² John Masefield, *With the Living Voice* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1925), p. 13.

which special pains are taken with the expression of feeling." Kenneth Burke says that literature as art is "designed for the express purpose of arousing emotions." We have already noticed T. S. Eliot's doctrine of an "objective correlative" as a formula which evokes emotion in the reader, a doctrine which we must balance against his statement in another essay that "Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion."

It would seem to be plain enough, then, that poetry is involved with emotion. However, there is a good deal of uncertainty as to just how it is involved, uncertainty as to the nature and function of emotion in the poet, in the poem, in the reader, and in the interpreter, who stands between the poem and an audience. On these matters modern criticism is just beginning to shed some light.

The common view is that a poet is deeply moved by some idea or experience; he puts his emotion on paper; the interpreter reads the poem feeling the same emotion as the poet; by expressing this emotion he conveys it to his hearers who thus are made to experience the same emotion that the poet began with. But this "bucket brigade" theory of the transference of emotion from one person to another cannot survive careful scrutiny. It just does not fit the facts of literary appreciation, and leaves too many things to be explained.

These are some of the questions that arise:

1. Does a poem always originate in the poet's emotion?
2. If so, is the emotion not modified and redefined during the process of putting it into poetic form?
3. Can a poet work without feeling? Can he not represent an emotion that he does not feel?
4. Does a poet sometimes intend that his readers feel a different emotion from the one which he represents?
5. Can a reader appreciate a poem without feeling the poet's emotion, by merely *contemplating* its emotion, or merely *sympathizing* with it?
6. Is emotion the only, or the chief, concern of poetry?
7. Should an interpreter of poetry feel emotion as he reads? If so, what emotion? What the poet felt? What the poet expressed? What the hearers are intended to feel? or something else?

Our chief concern, of course, is with the last of these questions, but it can be answered only after some consideration of the others.

The poet's emotion. Let us recall the basic conception that a poet, like any other artist, is an imitator of nature. The Greek word for poet means *maker*; a poet is one who makes poems out of whatever material he finds at hand. He may be stimulated by some excitement, as Masfield says, or he may not. He may just "get an idea" for a poem and proceed in a calm workmanlike way to put it into poetic form, imitating some scene, or mood, or experience, or event. If he represents an emotion it need not be one he has experienced; it may rather be one that he has observed in someone else. T. S. Eliot says, "Emotions which he has never experienced will serve his turn as well as those familiar to him." Sometimes an artist's work is the product of his study, not of his experience. Besides a good deal of lyric poetry is really dramatic. That is, the poet, though he speaks in the first person, expresses not his own thoughts and feelings, but those of other persons, or of people in general. And often a poet merely describes a scene or an event without telling how he feels about it, as does Shelley in his sonnet on Ozymandias. And so, as Eliseo Vivas says, "It is not necessary to assume that the actual emotion that is worked up by the poet into the poem is the actual occasion of the creative act."³

Emotion, then, may have various forms and be expressed in various ways. First, the poet may express a private personal emotion caused by some immediate experience: "But she is in her grave, and Oh the difference to me!" Secondly, he may express a personal feeling, but one that others experience also, one that all normal people may be expected to share: "The world is too much with us." Thirdly, he may say nothing about his feeling, may not even mention himself, but merely present a picture, an incident, a truth, in such a way that others will feel about it as he apparently does: "Bowed by the weight of centuries he leans upon his hoe and gazes at the ground." Fourthly, he may represent someone else as speaking and expressing emotions that are not the poet's at all, perhaps emotions that he would not approve of: "If hate killed men, Brother Lawrence, God's blood, would not mine kill you!" These are the chief forms of emotional expression as they concern the interpreter.

³ Eliseo Vivas, "The Objective Correlative of T. S. Eliot," in R. W. Stallman (ed.), *Critiques and Essays in Criticism* (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1949), p. 399.

It should be apparent that even when the poet is actuated by a burst of emotion, that emotion will be modified and transformed, and perhaps destroyed, in the process of trying to express it in poetic form. We all know how our emotions become altered or disintegrated when we try to put them into words. What gets expressed is not the original feeling at all, and this is all the more true if the expression has to be cut to fit the demands of some poetic form, such as the sonnet. And when a poem is as long as Milton's *Paradise Lost* or Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, requiring several years for its composition, the original emotion, if there was one, can surely not be maintained over so long a period. Emotions are always transient. Browning claimed credit for thoughts that he was unable to express:

Thoughts hardly to be packed
Into a narrow act,
Fancies that broke through language and escaped.

But Croce would say that the reason these thoughts could not be expressed was that they did not exist. (See the passage from his *Aesthetic*, p. 118.) A thought does not "break through language and escape"; its very essence is language, and as it begins to take form it takes form in language, or some other means of expression. A poet's conception is formed in language, and if his expression is cloudy it is because his conception is cloudy.

But is this true of emotion? Does an emotion exist only as it is put into words? All our experience answers No. We are constantly aware of feelings that we cannot put into language. We are, as we say, speechless with rage, or consternation, or joy, and the turbulence within is too real to admit any doubt of its existence. It may be relieved by words, but language is not its medium of expression. What do we mean, then, when we say that a poet "expresses" emotion? We mean that he sets forth certain images, objects, situations, events, or "objective correlatives" which, when our imaginations seize upon them, cause us to experience the appropriate emotion. The essential thing, as D. G. James insists, is "imaginative prehension . . . The weight of emphasis must always be on the vividness with which we grasp an imaginative object or

situation.”⁴ It is in this sense that a poet may be said to express emotion. The physical and glandular disturbance which constitutes the emotion, if he feels any such disturbance, remains within his own body. It cannot be put onto paper. What he gives us is images that properly cause emotion. If we are properly attuned, we will be appropriately moved by them. But the poet may be said to have expressed emotion whether he felt it or not and whether he arouses it in his hearers or not.

The reader's emotion. We have to note also that the emotion the poet expresses may not be the one his readers are expected to feel. Robert Burns's expression of his love for various Nells, Peggys, Jeans, Megs, and Marys can hardly be intended to stimulate our love for them, for we do not know them. Wordsworth's sonnet, "To Sleep," is a moving description of his weariness and yearning for rest, but it does not move us to insomnia and set us to counting sheep. Keats's depression when he has fears that he may not live to write down all the poems that fill his teeming brain is not a sentiment that we will feel if we are not writers. Our feeling in such cases is not the same as the poet's. It is rather a feeling of *sympathy* with his emotion. We feel pleasure in Burns's loves, we are sorry for Wordsworth's unrest, and in pity we sympathize with Keats's depression. It is as if you came upon a dear friend who was mourning over the loss of his father, whom you had never met. Your friend grieves from a sharp sense of personal loss, and you grieve with him, but you do not feel the same emotion that he feels; you feel no personal loss—you grieve merely in sympathy with his grief. When the poet writes dramatically, that is, when he represents some other person as speaking, the difference between that person's emotion and ours may be even greater. A painful emotion in the character may rouse a pleasant one in the reader, and *vice versa*. The distress and frustration of the gentleman in Browning's "Up at a Villa—Down in the City" we find amusing. Macbeth's murderous rage moves us to horror. And so with others.

In summary, then, we have found that a poem may, or may not, be occasioned by some emotion in the poet; that this emotion, if it was really experienced, will necessarily be modified and refined in

⁴ D. G. James, "I. A. Richards (A Denial of the 'Prime Agent'; and the Consequences)," in R. W. Stallman (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 487.

the process of composing the poem; that an emotion can be expressed on paper only by setting down the imaginative objects or situations that normally stimulate or accompany that emotion; that these stimuli sometimes arouse in the reader a similar emotion, sometimes merely sympathy for the emotion expressed, and sometimes a quite different emotion. His emotion, as we have considered it thus far, is dependent upon his imaginative activity as defined in the preceding chapter. As Elder Olson says, "Emotion in art results . . . not because we believe the thing real, but because we vividly contemplate it, i.e., are induced by the work of art to make mental images of it."⁵

Emotion arising from sound effects. So far we have considered emotion as arising from images, descriptions, and statements. But there are other ways in which poetry plays upon the feelings. One of these is through the sounds of the words employed, as we have noted in earlier chapters. Without doubt there is pleasure to be derived from sound alone, as we all know from our enjoyment of music. Our feeling about starting a new day will depend a good deal upon whether the rising hour is announced by a silvery chime, or the sharp rat-a-tat-tat of a nervous alarm clock. Some students of literature believe that certain specific sounds will arouse specific emotions, and even that particular letter-sounds will produce particular emotional effects.⁶ Be that as it may, there is no doubt that some sounds in language are harsh and grating, others liquid and soothing. Note the drowsy effect produced in part by the liquid consonants in Tennyson's description of the Lotos-eaters:

A land where all things always seem'd the same!
And round the keel with faces pale,
Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came.

⁵ Elder Olson, "An Outline of Poetic Theory," in R. W. Stallman (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 274.

⁶ See R. L. Stevenson's "On Some Technical Elements of Style in Literature," in Lane Cooper (ed.), *Theories of Style* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1912), and Elsa Chapin and R. B. Thomas, *A New Approach to Poetry* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929), Pt. I, chap. ii. But note also the cautions concerning such assumptions by Bliss Perry, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-29, and I. A. Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1925), chap. xvii.

And note on the other hand how in his song of the knights of King Arthur:

Flash brand and lance, fall battleaxe upon helm,
Fall battleaxe, and flash brand! Let the King reign.

the abrupt force and splintering effect of the clashing of weapons is seemingly aided by the skilful mixture of harsh and stopped consonants with open vowels. Here there are *l*'s and *r*'s and *n*'s, but they are generally cut short by less liquid sounds.

But you may say, our feelings in such passages are affected largely by the meaning of the words, and of course that is true. It is risky to attribute to any single sound the power to arouse unaided a specific shade of emotion. Tennyson's beautiful line,

The murmuring of innumerable bees,

may, by altering only two sounds, be changed to

The murdering of innumerable beeves,

but with what a difference in its effect! Nevertheless, there do seem to be combinations of sounds which in a given setting of thought and rhythm will stimulate certain feelings, and the interpreter of poetry must be aware of these effects and give them full value. When we dissociate sound from sense, as in nonsense verse, we get a truer test of the effect of sound alone. Who cannot easily distinguish the spirit of Swinburne's parody on himself:

Surely no spirit or sense of a soul that was soft to the spirit and
soul of our senses

Sweetens the stress of surprising suspicion that sobs in the sem-
blance and sound of a sigh.

from Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky":

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!

The effect of rhythm. It must be noted, however, that the moods of these two bits of verse are suggested not merely by the sounds employed, but even more perhaps by the rhythm of the lines, for rhythm as well as sound is an important element in the emotional effect of a poem. There seems to be a tendency for all poetic emotions to express themselves in rhythm. Herbert Spencer said that the meter of poetry is an "idealization of the natural language of strong emotion, which is known to be more or less metrical if the emotion be not too violent."⁷ And Professor Gummere says, "Rhythm is not artificial, not an invention; it lies at the heart of things, and in rhythm the noblest emotions find their noblest expression."⁸ Even the writers of free verse, in their moments of strongest feeling, break into traditional meter, as can be seen by looking at Walt Whitman's "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," or at Amy Lowell's "Patterns." Rhythm, then, is a concomitant of poetic feeling, and a free response to rhythm is of great value in arousing poetic feeling in others.

Rhythm varies with the kind of emotion to be represented. The power of different meters to stir different feelings will hardly be questioned. Even an unschooled child feels the difference between a lullaby and a gallop, and all of us feel in good poetry the appropriateness of the meter to the mood and idea. Think of the effect of putting the sentiments of Wordsworth's sonnet "The world is too much with us" into the stimulating march rhythm of Browning's "Cavalier Tune":

Kentish Sir Byng stood for his King,
Bidding the crop-headed Parliament swing: etc.

And think of the loss if the three first words of Tennyson's

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!

are read as if the meter did not demand long pauses between them to compensate for the syllables lacking to make complete feet. And notice what damage can be done in the fourth line of each stanza of

⁷ "The Philosophy of Style," in Lane Cooper (ed.), *Theories of Style* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1912), p. 301.

⁸ Francis Barton Gummere, *A Handbook of Poetics* (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1885), p. 135.

Keats's "La Belle Dame sans Merci" if its fewer syllables are not given as much time as the second lines:

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering!
The sedge has withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

He who aspires to interpret a poem must discover its rhythmical pattern and communicate it to his hearers, else he will falsify or ignore a large part of the poet's meaning, and neglect one of the surest and most necessary means of stirring emotion.

The function of the interpreter. We are ready now to consider the function of the oral interpreter of poetry as regards especially its emotional quality. It is clear that for the listener he takes the place of the printed page. He presents the poem to his audience, but he has the power to do a great deal more than cold type can do.

Mr. Masfield points out that poets today have less stimulus than in earlier times to make their poems exciting. The primitive poet, he says, was a man of the tribe, living as the tribe lived, sharing its interests and delights. He spoke or sang his poetry to assemblies of his fellow tribesmen, frequently composing as he sang; and he had the direct, instant criticism of an audience that might grow cold with disapproval or indifference as he sang, or which might catch his excitement and carry him beyond himself with enthusiasm.⁹ He was a public entertainer. The early epics were composed for audiences, and lived for years only, or chiefly, on the tongues of public reciters. Only in later times were they written down, and so preserved for posterity. In ancient Greece contests in reciting poetry were established by law. A poet who recited his own works, or a professional reader who recited the works of some poet, was called a *rhapsode*. The impassioned style of his recitation has given us our modern words *rhapsodist* and *rhapsodic*. The young rhapsode Ion, in Plato's dialogue of that name (see Appendix), admits that when reading Homer he is beside himself. Later the troubadours in France and the Minnesänger in Germany made love lyrics which they sang to various audiences.

⁹ John Masfield, *With the Living Voice* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1925), pp. 12-14.

With the coming of the printing press this intimate contact of the poet with his audience was lost, but not the desire to reach an audience. Milton in his *Paradise Lost* set for himself the gigantic task of justifying the ways of God to man. Shakespeare wrote for the audiences who came to hear his plays. Shelley in his "Ode to the West Wind" yearned to have his dead thoughts driven over the universe like withered leaves to quicken a new birth. And so with others.

One function of the interpreter is to restore to poetry some of the values of the direct contact with an audience which poets had in primitive society. John Masefield believes that the public recitation of poetry may do something to acquaint the people again with its enchantments, and that it may also stimulate poets to recover the vitality that once enabled them to thrill and move a crowd of men and women. Significantly, another modern poet, John Holmes, relates that by listening to recordings of his own reading, and by his experience in reading poems to audiences, he "discovered the need of much wilder and wider rhythms—a poem ought to be a good fat part for an actor." He learned "not only to speak poetry to be heard, but to write poems to be spoken to be heard."¹⁰

Poetry is meant to be heard. We should notice here the theory sometimes propounded that poetry is meant for the closet and has no concern with an audience. It has the support of no less a mind than John Stuart Mill's, whose opinion was that the peculiarity of poetry lies "in the poet's utter unconsciousness of a listener," that poetry is "feeling confessing itself to itself in moments of solitude." Some modern artists scorn, or pretend to scorn, communication. The artist may say that communication is irrelevant or unimportant, that he is making something that satisfies him personally, or something expressive of himself, or of his emotions, something personal, individual, and private.

But I. A. Richards points out that the artist does not realize how completely his activity is controlled by the necessity for communication. "The very structure of our minds," he says, "is largely determined by the fact that man has been engaged in communicating for so many hundreds of thousands of years. . . . An experience

¹⁰ See John Ciardi, *Mid-Century American Poets* (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1950), p. 204.

has to be formed, no doubt, before it is communicated, but it takes the form it does largely because it may have to be communicated. . . . The arts are the supreme form of the communicative activity." True enough, the artist may not deliberately and consciously work for an audience. He may feel that direct concern over how his work will be received would dissipate his attention from his creative activity, and cheapen the result. "But this conscious neglect of communication," say Professor Richards, "does not in the least diminish the communicative aspect. . . . The very process of getting the work 'right' has itself, so far as the artist is normal, immense communicative consequences. . . . The degree to which it accords with the relevant experience of the artist is a measure of the degree to which it will arouse similar experiences in others."¹¹

This "closet" theory of poetry ignores not only the history of poetry and its essential communicative aspect; it ignores also the vocal values of poetry, which are a part of its very essence. "A poem is not primarily a series of printed word-signs addressed to the eye," said Bliss Perry; "it is a series of sounds addressed to the ear, and the arbitrary symbols for these sounds do not convey the poem unless they are audibly rendered."¹² "A poem is not a poem," said Hiram Corson, "until it is voiced by an accomplished reader who has adequately assimilated it—in whom it has, to some extent, been born again."¹³ Note again the statement by Lane Cooper given in a previous chapter, "Every bit of literature properly so called that history has to show is intended, not for the eye primarily, but for the ear. Every line of Shakespeare, every line of Milton, is meant to be pronounced, cannot be duly appreciated until it is pronounced."

Traditionally, then, and from its very nature, poetry is intended to please and move an audience. Its values can best be realized when it is read aloud.

The interpreter's emotion. It should be plain from the above discussion that an interpreter of literature cannot perform his proper function by simply echoing the emotion of his author, or by merely

¹¹ I. A. Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1925), pp. 25-27.

¹² *Op. cit.*, p. 100.

¹³ Hiram Corson, *The Voice and Spiritual Education* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1904), p. 20.

giving vent to his own natural feeling. How then does he interpret emotion? Since for his audience he takes the place of the printed page, may he be as impassive as cold print? May he merely present the vocal symbols and allow them to have what effect they may? Can he transmit emotion from author to audience without feeling it himself? Where a scene or incident is merely described, should he try to color it by voice and gesture with what he thinks is the appropriate emotion? When an author is apparently expressing his own personal emotion, and when it is one that the audience may well feel too, should the interpreter also feel it? When an emotion is expressed which will arouse in any normal reader a different emotion (Macbeth's fury, for instance), should the interpreter feel the emotion expressed? Or in such a case should he feel what the audience should feel?

The answer to all these questions is Yes. It is true that some of them are mutually contradictory, but the answer is still Yes. There is no single formula for emotion, suitable to all readers on all occasions and for all forms of emotional material. The presence or absence of feeling in an interpreter, and the nature of the feeling when it is present, depend upon the kind of work he is reading, and to some extent upon his temperament.

Let us note first that an audience can be moved to deep feeling by a performer who himself feels no emotion, just as they can be moved by inanimate puppets, or animated cartoons, or motion pictures, or a ventriloquist's dummy. Many actors go through their parts cold. Something more will be said on this matter in the next chapter. But since the author of a poem may not have felt the emotion he has worked up in it, and since those who read the poem, and those who hear it read, will have their emotions stirred chiefly, if not entirely, by "imaginative prehension" of what the poem says, it is not necessary that the interpreter's emotions be involved. He may merely present the poem and let it do its proper work, though in such a case he will need to reveal a very alert and active imagination. Whether he feels emotion will depend upon his temperament and his technique.

Secondly, let us note on the other hand, that emotion is contagious. A hearty laughter makes others merry; an apostle of gloom spreads depression all around him; a display of courage makes others more brave. By feeling what he expresses, an interpreter may help

greatly to stimulate feeling in his hearers. He has a great advantage over the poet since emotion is always, as Aristotle taught, an impulse to action, and his visible action may enhance the effect of the poet's words and make them much more powerful. But it is true also that a display of emotion is sometimes repellent and disgusting. We do not sympathize with those who too easily give way to mirth, or indignation, or grief. Tearing a passion to tatters offends us to the soul. One may, by representing evil emotions, or by an unjustified excess of emotion, excite a different, or a contrary, feeling in his audience. And, of course, this is sometimes the effect the author desires.

Application to particular poems. Now perhaps we had better get down to cases. Let us examine some poems and try to determine what emotional treatment they call for. In his sonnet, "The World is too much with us," to be found at the end of this chapter, Wordsworth is expressing a communal emotion that all of us can feel, and the hearers are more likely to be moved if the reader too seems to feel it. Poet, interpreter, and audience all agree in their emotional response, though few of us may wish to go so far as to reject Christianity, as Wordsworth suggests. And so with Wilfred Owen's "Anthem for Doomed Youth" and Markham's "The Man with the Hoe" (both to be found on later pages). Here the authors contemplate facts, events, conditions that stir deep feeling, and both interpreter and audience as they contemplate what is presented will be moved by the same feeling.

But Michael Drayton's sonnet, "Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part" (to be found at the end of this chapter), is personal, but in a sense dramatic. Perhaps Drayton never experienced this situation, but only imagined it. We are called upon to observe the author's feeling, not to share it. As we regard his relief over his renunciation, or pretended renunciation, of love, we do not feel relief, but rather amusement. In the same way we observe the expression of personal passion in any of Shakespeare's sonnets, and sympathize with it without sharing it. How should such emotions affect the interpreter? Does he side with the poet, or with the audience? Probably with both. He assumes the feeling of the poet, but he need not share it. While presenting the feeling he should show at the same time that he is amused by it, or sympathizes with it, or

in some cases that he disapproves of it. Mrs. Browning's sonnet of deep personal feeling (p. 397) can be interpreted by a man, and by one who is not in love at all. Any emotion which he may feel is not personal and real, for it is not directed toward a real object. One may feel a general pleasure, even without being aware of the cause of it. But a specific emotion always has a cause and an object. We are not just angry in general, we are angry *at* something. We do not experience love in general, we love some one or some thing. And so Mrs. Browning's love, an ardent passion with a specific object, is *her* love and will not be experienced by either interpreter or audience, though both will sympathize with it and find pleasure in it.

And in a similar manner a girl reading Keats's sonnet (p. 396), "Bright star! Would I were steadfast as thou art," may, if she does not rather identify herself with the woman, imagine the emotions of a man pillowed upon his fair love's ripening breast, and feel sympathetically Keats's emotion, and move her audience with that feeling, but neither she nor the women in her audience will feel what Keats felt—a yearning to rest forever on his beloved's bosom.

An interpreter must distinguish, then, between, on the one hand, the poet's expression of a personal private emotion, motivated by a specific experience, and, on the other hand, his expression of a general emotion such as all can feel, or an impersonal description of events, scenes, experiences, etc., that cause emotion. Only in the latter case will the interpreter normally, though not necessarily, feel the same emotion as the poet, and communicate it also to his audience.

When a poem is definitely dramatic, when a character other than the poet is represented as speaking, and when the reader is not expected to experience the same emotion as this character, a different problem confronts the interpreter. Should he assume the emotion of the character, or that of the audience? Or should he be emotionally neutral?

There is no easy and definite answer. Any one of these three choices may at various times be best. In reading Browning's "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" (p. 462), for instance, an interpreter may, in portraying the cheap malignant hatred of this strange character, work up in himself, in greater or lesser degree, the passions he is representing. He may, on the other hand, be able to represent the character vividly without experiencing any feeling of

hate, just as we all may assume anger without really being angry, or pretend to be cheerful when we are not. Or, he may while presenting the poem identify himself with the audience, contemplate with them the scene he is presenting, and feel with them the contempt and amusement the poem is intended to arouse. In informal situations he may even interpolate comments that reveal the identity of his feeling with that of the audience, as do many teachers of literature in reading dramatic scenes to their classes.

If all this is confusing and contradictory, it is because the facts of emotional experience and communication are confusing and contradictory. If we make the interpretation of emotion too simple and definite, we are likely to falsify the facts. It is probably best to think less about feeling, expressing, and arousing emotion, and more about clear "imaginative prehension" and vivid presentation of the *causes* of emotion—the statements, objects, incidents, and images of which poetry is made.

The nature of emotional expression. When the interpreter does feel emotion, or when he only simulates it, he will make it evident to his audience chiefly by the tone of his voice. But he should not neglect to use also the visible forms of communication—bodily movement and facial expression. Emotion is largely physical, if it be not entirely physical. "The poet's language," says Bliss Perry, "betrays his bodily and mental history," and he quotes Thoreau as saying that the poet writes the history of his own body.¹⁴ Gilbert Murray points out that the Greek lyric was "derived directly from the religious dance; that is, not merely the pattering of the feet, but the *yearning movement of the whole body*, the ultimate expression of emotion that cannot be pressed into articulate speech, compact of intense rhythm and intense feeling."¹⁵ If, as Aristotle said, the poet in composing should, in order to represent feeling with the most convincing reality, "assume the very attitudes and gestures appropriate to the emotions of the agents,"¹⁶ how much more should the interpreter of poetry yield himself to suggestions of bodily impulse.

¹⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 107.

¹⁵ Gilbert Murray, "What English Poetry May Still Learn from Greek," *Atlantic Monthly*, Nov. 1912, p. 669.

¹⁶ Aristotle, *Poetics* 17.

It is normal and natural for any real emotion to express itself in some overt physical movement, that is, in gesture. But the current convention of good taste, in recitation as in singing, requires that nearly all such responses be inhibited. Among people of taste and refinement these "bodily yearnings" must find visible outlet chiefly in facial expression. For a reader of Shelley's salute to the skylark, "Hail to thee, blithe spirit," to greet the bird with a wave of the hand would be as inappropriate as for a vocal interpreter of Schubert's setting of Shakespeare's "Hark, hark! the lark" to do the same. One's emotional intensity and imaginative alertness in both cases must be expressed chiefly through the voice and face.

Emotion must be disciplined. I think there is little danger that modern students will abandon themselves to excesses of emotion. They are far more likely to interpret great masterpieces of poetic passion with colorless and prosy rationality. But for fear a few may be tempted to excess let it be noted that Wordsworth's "spontaneous overflow" is not to be recommended too literally. Wordsworth himself would be almost the last poet that we could accuse of an excess of raw, undisciplined feeling. His own work had the careful planning and patient revision that characterize the production of all good artists. In "L'Allegro" Milton describes a singer's voice as running through the intricate mazes of a song "with wanton heed and giddy cunning." The reader, like the singer, will often wish to give an impression of wantonness and giddiness, but he will best achieve it by a due exercise of heed and cunning. Our abandon must be disciplined; our passion must be schooled.

Idea must dominate. I have stressed here the necessity for reading poetry with high excitement, with a "yearning movement of the whole body." But I assume that this advice will not cause neglect of the instruction in an earlier chapter for getting a thorough understanding of thought content. Emotion is an important element in poetry, but it is only one element. Great poetry endures as much because of its idea as because of its ability to stir our emotions. Wordsworth required for the reading of his essentially lyrical pieces "an animated or impassioned recitation"; but he recognized that the formal and emotional elements must not be allowed to dominate. "The law of long syllable and short," he said, "must not be so inflexible, . . . as to deprive the Reader of all voluntary power to

modulate, *in subordination to the sense*, the music of the poem.”¹⁷ Even in such verse as that of Swinburne and Poe, where there is an evident intention to make the sound dominate the sense, to arouse emotion directly from sound without the intervention of idea, it is important that emotion, rhythm, and imagery be kept subordinate to the grammatical structure. Until you have discovered the underlying skeleton of thought upon which a poem is built, you should not attempt to interpret it to others. In poetry even more than in prose the practice of *précis* writing or paraphrasing will be helpful.

The golden mean. There is a delicate mean to be discovered between mere emotional overflow on the one hand, and a matter-of-fact rationality on the other. As I have cautioned against an excess of emotion, so a contrary caution may be given against a complete suppression of musical and emotional values. One sometimes hears it said that since the pattern for all speech is derived from conversation, the reading of poetry should be conversational. Surely no sensible person who is acquainted with the nature and the history of poetry would say that it should sound like ordinary talk. The expression of logical content in poetry as in prose is based upon the patterns of conversation, but neither in poetry nor in prose should the author's mood be ignored. Exaltation should sound like exaltation, not like drivel. Even those occasional lines of poetry which might occur also in prose, which have nothing within them to suggest that they are poetry, must be colored by the mood of their context, and read with a feeling appropriate to the whole.

Take, for instance, the first line of Wordsworth's sonnet, "The world is too much with us." It is the language of prose rather than of poetry. It is not conspicuously rhythmical, it is not highly figurative, it stirs no vivid images. It could conceivably be uttered rather casually in some moment of ordinary conversation. But in its present context it must not sound like conversation. It is the beginning of a sonnet of deep feeling, and so must be read with deep feeling. Quintilian advised well concerning the golden mean between the singsong and the prosy: "Let not his [the Roman boy's] reading of the poets be like that of prose; for it is verse, and the poets say that

¹⁷ Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, 1815.

they sing; yet let it not degenerate into singsong, or be rendered effeminate with unnatural softness, as is now the practice among most readers; on which sort of reading we hear that Caius Caesar, while he was still under age, observed happily of some one that was practicing it, 'If you are singing you sing badly; if you pretend to read, you nevertheless sing.'"¹⁸

Elements of emotional expression. What is the difference between a reading that is conversational or merely rational, and one that is emotional or poetical? Taking the line just mentioned, "The world is too much with us," what is it that we do to it to lift it from the realm of prose to the realm of poetry? In this case what is called for is a profound brooding melancholy. In poetry of this general type, and that means nearly all poetry except that of vigorous movement or sprightly gayety, there are two leading requirements for appropriate emotional expression. Both have been discussed in earlier chapters. The first is the blending of words and syllables into a continuous liquid flow of sound, a series of even breath-groups, often identical with the lines of the verse. The second is a tendency, more or less pronounced in different moods, to level out the normal melodic pattern of the voice into something approaching a monotone, a tendency to chant or intone the verse in a manner reminiscent of its origin in the songs of bards, minstrels, and gleemen.

Take, for instance, our normal expression of any poetic sentiment in daily conversation "It was the most beautiful night I have ever seen," or "What a pity he couldn't have lived a few years longer." Such sentiments, when deeply felt, we normally speak with a sustained, even legato, and without great or sudden pitch changes. Or take some such high watermark in poetry as these lines from Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale":

Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn.

It is inconceivable that any sensible person would read these lines staccato, or that he would give them the rational intonation pattern appropriate to matter of fact. One reason why professional actors

¹⁸ Quintilian *Institutio oratoria* i. 8. 2.

have difficulty in reading poetry of sustained serious feeling is that they have found it necessary in their profession to cultivate a sharp staccato utterance, and cannot easily change to the smooth even legato appropriate to such poetry. The *mechanical* method of achieving this sustained fluidity of expression was discussed in the chapter on Voice Improvement.

Deliberation. Both thought and feeling require that lyrics of the type defined above, the type of which the sonnet is a characteristic example, be read with deliberation. Their movement is characteristically a slow *andante*, and to hurry them is as disastrous as to play a funeral march in jig time. Poetry contains such emotions as we love to experience for their own sake. It contains images which require time for their realization. It is made up of melodies which should dwell long in our ears. "Realization is a flower of leisure and does not blossom quickly," says Max Eastman. And he goes on to say that a prime requisite in the appreciation of poetry is the power to linger—"the power of lingering with energy."¹⁹ The brothers Croiset say of the lyric that "nothing is more contrary to its nature than hurrying. If it hastens it sacrifices that which is its power."²⁰ Poetic feeling is deep and deliberate. We must learn, then, in the oral interpretation of poetry to taste the full flavor of every line, to hold it like a delicious morsel lovingly on the tongue. This is as necessary for the appreciation of those who read as for that of those who hear.

Unity of thought and feeling. An interpreter of literature must have a good memory. Besides keeping his mind on the thought he is uttering at a given moment, he must remember what he has said and be aware also of what is coming. If he fails to do this he may give false emphasis or false meaning to some part of his selection. Some poems are so constructed that their meaning remains obscure until all the pieces are put together, and then the meaning suddenly "explodes." See, for instance, Peter Viereck's "Some Lines in Three Parts" (p. 364), and, though here the explosion is very gentle and has been foreshadowed, Robinson's "Mr. Flood's Party" (p. 351).

¹⁹ Max Eastman, *Enjoyment of Poetry* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904), p. 175.

²⁰ Alfred and Maurice Croiset, *Histoire de la Littérature Grecque* (Paris: 1899), III, 108.

In short lyrical and narrative poems, and in longer ones too, there is generally a unity of feeling which may be lost sight of by an inexperienced reader because of his intoxication with particular lines. No attempt should be made to interpret a part of a poem until the feeling of the whole is understood. The prevailing emotion, like the dominant thought, will be discovered by a careful study of the whole. But no anatomization of the poem in the process of study should prevent our seeing it steadily and seeing it whole. In the Wordsworth sonnet to be used for drill in this chapter there is a temptation with many readers to allow the mood to brighten on the lines:

The sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;

neglectful of the fact that Wordsworth is not at the moment delighting in these beauties of nature, but rather lamenting our indifference to them. The last two lines are, of course, "less forlorn," though they retain also something of the feeling of dejection which characterizes the whole.

Summary. Emotion is an important element in poetry. A poet may, or may not, be activated by the emotion he expresses in his poem, but any emotion he feels or expresses will be greatly modified by the process of putting it into words. He expresses emotion by setting forth the images, situations, events, etc., that induce emotion. Sometimes the emotion expressed is not the one the readers of the poem are expected to feel; they may sympathize with the emotion without sharing it. Emotion may be induced and stimulated also by the sounds of the words employed and by their rhythm. The interpreter should help to restore to poetry some of the vitality which it had in primitive society when the poet was in direct contact with his audience, since traditionally poetry has been meant to be heard. The interpreter, no more than the poet, need always feel the emotion he expresses. If the emotion is communal, poet, interpreter, and audience may all feel it in the same way. If it is personal and private, interpreter and audience will sympathize with it but not experience it. In dramatic poetry both interpreter and audience should often feel an emotion quite different from the one the inter-

preter must express. The interpreter's emotion will be evidenced by vocal and physical responses, but it should be carefully disciplined and kept in subordination to the thought. His utterance should not be colloquial, but sustained and almost level, and never hurried. He must maintain a unity of both thought and feeling.

PLAN OF STUDY

58. Analyze carefully the emotions expressed by the poet and determine whether they are private and individual, or such as may be shared by all normal readers.

59. Consider carefully what attitude you should take toward the poem's emotion—whether to share it, to contemplate it sympathetically, or to react against it.

60. Consider then how you want your audience to react, and how you may obtain from them this desired reaction.

61. Discover all the emotional effects that may be conveyed by the sounds of the words and their rhythm, and plan to give them full value.

62. Plan to read with a vitality and intensity that will command the attention of your audience and move them in the desired way.

63. Do not, however, plan to work yourself up to a high pitch of emotion; concentrate rather on how you can present vividly the events, scenes, experiences, sounds, and rhythms that cause emotion.

64. In rehearsal allow these stimuli to affect your bodily responses freely, but in recital be more cautious and reserved, remembering that strong emotional displays are more likely to offend and repel than to please.

65. For most poems keep your utterance smooth and sustained, and avoid the sudden changes of sprightly conversation, but don't sing. Plan to speak deliberately; do not hurry.

66. Through all your study and practice take pains to keep the poem integrated into a coherent whole, and deliver it as such.

CRITERIA

50. Did the reader maintain an appropriate glow of excitement?

51. Did he make an intelligent choice as to whether to share the poet's emotion, merely report it, sympathize with it, or react against it?

52. Did he stimulate his audience to the right reaction?

53. Did he capitalize all the effects of sound and rhythm that could help to stimulate emotional response?

54. Were his physical responses effective, but appropriately disciplined?

55. Was his utterance sustained, fluid, and deliberate, and his intonation sufficiently level (if the poem was one of deep and solemn feeling)?

56. Did he present the poem as a coherent whole, unified in thought and feeling?

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What evidence can you cite to show that poetry is involved with emotion?
2. Explain the difference between expressing an emotion and feeling it. In what ways may a poet express emotion?
3. How will a poet's feeling be modified by his attempt to express it in poetic form? *Can* it be put into words?
4. What is the relation of the feeling the poet expresses to the feeling his readers are expected to feel?
5. How may the *sounds* of poetry affect the emotions?
6. What function of the primitive poets may a modern interpreter perform?
7. Explain how poetry is essentially communicative, whether the poet meant it to be or not.
8. Why can poetry perform its proper function only when it is heard?
9. What is the relation of the interpreter's emotion to the poet's? To the emotions of his audience?
10. What distinction must an interpreter make in the types of emotion the poet expresses?
11. By what means does an interpreter express emotion?
12. Discuss the relative values of thought and emotion in poetry. What is the interpreter's obligation to each?
13. How does an emotional or poetical reading differ from a conversational or merely rational reading?
14. Why should poetry be read with deliberation?

SELECTION FOR DRILL

THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US

William Wordsworth

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
The sea that bares her bosom to the moon; 5
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be 10
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS: Take great pains with the pronunciation of *world, with, soon, our, powers, little, nature, ours, bosom, winds, will be, howling, flowers, not, God, outworn, standing, Proteus, Triton*. Note the grammatical construction of "late and soon"; it belongs with the second line, and is subordinate to "getting and spending." In lines 5-8 keep the thought suspended until the main clause: "we are out of tune." The ejaculation "Great God!" had better be attached to the clause that follows it, if it is not to sound profane. The word-group will be: "Great God! I'd rather be a Pagan." In general, give the lines the full value of the slow iambic meter, but in several places you will need to break its regularity. You can increase the impression of profound sadness by bearing down evenly on the successions of heavy monosyllables: "It moves us not" and "we lay waste our powers." Keep the lungs full of air, and support every word-group steadily and continuously with firm abdominal pressure. Give full value to all the strong syllables, especially on the open vowels. Avoid such colloquial readings as, "We've giv'n 'r hearts away" and "The win's th't wi' be howling 't all ares." Feeling should be deep and genuine and evenly sustained. Make your hearers feel that you actually see the ocean before you, that you hear the winds, and that you catch a vision of old Triton and Proteus, and that you are profoundly moved by our indifference to Nature's beauties. This

dejection reaches a climax in line 9: "It moves us not," then changes to something like despair, from which it reacts to a brighter mood in the last three lines.

SELECTIONS FOR PRACTICE

Sir Philip Sidney

With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies!
How silently, and with how wan a face!
What! may it be that even in heav'nly place
That busy archer his sharp arrows tries?
Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case,
I read it in thy looks,—thy languished grace,
To me, that feel the like, thy state describes.
Then, ev'n of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
Is constant love deem'd there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be lov'd, and yet
Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?
Do they call virtue there ungratefulness?

Michael Drayton

Since there's no help, come, let us kiss and part!
Nay, I have done; you get no more of me!
And I am glad, yea, glad, with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free.

Shake hands for ever! Cancel all our vows!
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows,
That we one jot of former love retain!

Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,
When, his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies;
When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And Innocence is closing up his eyes,—

Now, if thou wouldst, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover!

READING ALOUD

William Shakespeare

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
 Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
 Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
 And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
 Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
 And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
 And every fair from fair sometime declines,
 By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
 But thy eternal summer shall not fade
 Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
 Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
 When in eternal lines to time thou growest:
 So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
 So long lives this and this gives life to thee.

William Shakespeare

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
 I all alone beweep my outcast state
 And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries
 And look upon myself and curse my fate,
 Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
 Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd,
 Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
 With what I most enjoy contented least;
 Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
 Haply I think on thee,—and then my state,
 Like to the lark at break of day arising
 From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
 For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings
 That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

William Shakespeare

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
 I summon up remembrance of things past,
 I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
 And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste;
 Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
 For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,

And weep afresh love's long-since-cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight.
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoanèd moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear Friend,
All losses are restored, and sorrows end.

William Shakespeare

Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea,
But sad mortality o'ersways their power,
How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea,
Whose action is no stronger than a flower?
O! how shall summer's honey breath hold out
Against the wreckful siege of battering days,
When rocks impregnable are not so stout
Nor gates of steel so strong, but Time decays?
O fearful meditation! where, alack!
Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid?
Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back?
Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid?
O! none, unless this miracle have might,
That in black ink my love may still shine bright.

William Shakespeare

When I have seen by Time's fell hand defaced
The rich proud cost of outworn buried age;
When sometime lofty towers I see down-razed
And brass eternal slave to mortal rage;
When I have seen the hungry ocean gain
Advantage on the kingdom of the shore,
And the firm soil win of the watery main,
Increasing store with loss, and loss with store;
When I have seen such interchange of state,
Or state itself confounded to decay;
Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminat—
That time will come and take my love away.
This thought is as a death, which cannot choose
But weep to have that which it fears to lose.

William Shakespeare

No longer mourn for me when I am dead
 Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell
 Give warning to the world that I am fled
 From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell:
 Nay, if you read this line, remember not
 The hand that writ it; for I love you so
 That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot
 If thinking on me then should make you woe.
 O! if,—I say, you look upon this verse,
 When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
 Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,
 But let your love even with my life decay;
 Lest the wise world should look into your moan
 And mock you with me after I am gone.

William Shakespeare

That time of year thou mayst in me behold
 When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
 Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
 Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
 In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
 As after sunset fadeth in the west,
 Which by and by black night doth take away,
 Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
 In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
 That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
 As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
 Consumed with that which it was nourish'd by.
 This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,
 To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

William Shakespeare

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
 Admit impediments. Love is not love
 Which alters when it alteration finds,
 Or bends with the remover to remove:
 O, no! it is an ever-fixèd mark
 That looks on tempests, and is never shaken;

It is the star to every wand'ring bark,
 Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
 Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
 Within his bending sickle's compass come;
 Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
 But bears it out even to the edge of doom:
 If this be error, and upon me proved,
 I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

ON HIS BLINDNESS

John Milton

When I consider how my light is spent
 Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
 And that one Talent which is death to hide
 Lodged with me useless, though my Soul more bent
 To serve therewith my Maker, and present
 My true account, lest he returning chide,
 Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?
 I fondly ask; But patience, to prevent
 That murmur, soon replies, God doth not need
 Either man's work, or his own gifts: who best
 Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best: his State
 Is Kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed
 And post o'er Land and Ocean without rest:
 They also serve who only stand and wait.

TO SLEEP

William Wordsworth

A flock of sheep that leisurely pass by,
 One after one; the sound of rain, and bees
 Murmuring; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
 Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky:
 I've thought of all by turns, and yet do lie
 Sleepless! and soon the small birds' melodies
 Must hear, first utter'd from my orchard trees,
 And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.
 Even thus last night, and two nights more I lay,
 And could not win thee, Sleep! by any stealth:

READING ALOUD

So do not let me wear to-night away:
 Without Thee what is all the morning's wealth?
 Come, blessèd barrier between day and day
 Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health!

LONDON, 1802

William Wordsworth

Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour:
 England has need of thee: she is a fen
 Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
 Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
 Have forfeited their ancient English dower
 Of inward happiness. We are selfish men:
 Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
 And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
 Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:
 Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea,
 Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free;
 So didst thou travel on life's common way
 In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
 The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

WHEN I HAVE BORNE IN MEMORY WHAT HAS TAMED

William Wordsworth

When I have borne in memory what has tamed
 Great Nations; how ennobling thoughts depart
 When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
 The student's bower for gold,—some fears unnamed
 I had, my Country!—am I to be blamed?
 Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,
 Verily, in the bottom of my heart
 Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
 For dearly must we prize thee; we who find
 In thee a bulwark for the cause of men;
 And I by my affection was beguiled:
 What wonder if a Poet now and then,
 Among the many movements of his mind,
 Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

ON THE CASTLE OF CHILLON

Lord Byron

Eternal Spirit of the chainless Mind!
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,
For there thy habitation is the heart—
The heart which love of Thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd,
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
Chillon! thy prison is a holy place
And thy sad floor an altar, for 'twas trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard! May none those marks efface!
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

OZYMANDIAS OF EGYPT

Percy Bysshe Shelley

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,
Half sunk, a shatter'd visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamp'd on these lifeless things,
The hand that mock'd them and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

WHEN I HAVE FEARS

John Keats

When I have fears that I may cease to be
Before my pen has glean'd my teeming brain,
Before high-pilèd books, in charact'ry
Hold like rich garners the full-ripen'd grain;
When I behold, upon the night's starr'd face,
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,
And think that I may never live to trace
Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance;
And when I feel, fair creature of an hour!
That I shall never look upon thee more,
Never have relish in the faery power
Of unreflecting love:—then on the shore
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think
Till love and fame to nothingness do sink.

BRIGHT STAR! WOULD I WERE STEADFAST AS
THOU ART*John Keats*

Bright Star! would I were steadfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night,
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like Nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors:—
No—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest;
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever,—or else swoon to death.

HOW DO I LOVE THEE?

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and Ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of everyday's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise;
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith;
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints,—I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

THE NEW COLOSSUS *

Emma Lazarus

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

* This sonnet is engraved on a tablet on the base of the Statue of Liberty on Bedloe's Island in New York Harbor.

BE STILL. THE HANGING GARDENS WERE A DREAM *

Trumbull Stickney

Be still. The Hanging Gardens were a dream
That over Persian roses flew to kiss
The curlèd lashes of Semiramis.
Troy never was, nor green Skamander stream.
Provence and Troubadour are merest lies,
The glorious hair of Venice was a beam
Made within Titian's eye. The sunsets seem,
The world is very old and nothing is.
Be still. Thou foolish thing, thou canst not wake,
Nor thy tears wedge thy soldered lids apart,
But patter in the darkness of thy heart.
Thy brain is plagued. Thou art a frightened owl
Blind with the light of life thou'dst not forsake,
And Error loves and nourishes thy soul.

ANTHEM FOR DOOMED YOUTH †

Wilfred Owen

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries for them; no prayers nor bells,
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,—
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-bys.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

* By permission of Henry A. Stickney.

† From *Poems*, published by New Directions and reprinted by their permission.

AS IN THE MIDST OF BATTLE THERE IS ROOM *

George Santayana

As in the midst of battle there is room
 For thoughts of love, and in foul sin for mirth;
 As gossips whisper of a trinket's worth
 Spied by the death-bed's flickering candle-gloom;
 As in the crevices of Caesar's tomb
 The sweet herbs flourish on a little earth:
 So in this great disaster of our birth
 We can be happy, and forget our doom.

For morning, with a ray of tenderest joy
 Gilding the iron heaven, hides the truth,
 And evening gently woos us to employ
 Our grief in idle catches. Such is youth;
 Till from that summer's trance we wake, to find
 Despair before us, vanity behind.

BREDON HILL †

A. E. Housman

In summertime on Bredon
 The bells they sound so clear;
 Round both the shires they ring them
 In steeples far and near,
 A happy noise to hear.

Here of a Sunday morning
 My love and I would lie
 And see the colored counties
 And hear the larks so high
 About us in the sky.

The bells would ring to call her
 In valleys miles away:
 "Come all to church, good people;
 Good people, come and pray."
 But here my love would stay.

* By permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

† From *A Shropshire Lad*, by permission of Henry Holt & Co.

READING ALOUD

And I would turn and answer
 Among the springing thyme,
 "Oh, peal upon our wedding,
 And we will hear the chime,
 And come to church in time."

But when the snows at Christmas
 On Bredon top were strown,
 My love rose up so early
 And stole out unbeknown
 And went to church alone.

They tolled the one bell only,
 Groom there was none to see,
 The mourners followed after,
 And so to church went she,
 And would not wait for me.

The bells they sound on Bredon,
 And still the steeples hum.
 "Come all to church, good people,—"
 Oh, noisy bells, be dumb;
 I hear you, I will come.

SPRING NIGHT *

Sara Teasdale

The park is filled with night and fog,
 The veils are drawn about the world,
 The drowsy lights along the paths
 Are dim and pearled.

Gold and gleaming the empty streets,
 Gold and gleaming the misty lake,
 The mirrored lights like sunken swords,
 Glimmer and shake.

Oh, is it not enough to be
 Here with this beauty over me?
 My throat should ache with praise, and I
 Should kneel in joy beneath the sky.

* From *Collected Poems*, by permission of The Macmillan Co.

O Beauty, are you not enough?
Why am I crying after love
With youth, a singing voice, and eyes
To take earth's wonder with surprise?
Why have I put off my pride,
Why am I unsatisfied,—
I, for whom the pensive night
Binds her cloudy hair with light,—
I, for whom all beauty burns
Like incense in a million urns?
O Beauty, are you not enough?
Why am I crying after love?

FULFILLMENT *

Robert Nichols

Was there love once? I have forgotten her.
Was there grief once? Grief still is mine.
Other loves I have; men rough, but men who stir
More joy, more grief than love of thee and thine.

Faces cheerful, full of whimsical mirth,
Lined by the wind, burned by the sun;
Bodies enraptured by the abounding earth,
As whose children, brothers we are and one.

And any moment may descend hot death
To shatter limbs! pulp, tear, and blast
Belovèd soldiers who love rude life and breath
Not less for dying faithful to the last.

O the fading eyes, the grimèd face turned bony,
Open, black, gushing mouth, fallen head,
Failing pressure of a held hand shrunk and stony,
O sudden spasm, release of the dead!

Was there love once? I have forgotten her.
Was there grief once? Grief still is mine.
O loved, living, dying, heroic soldier,
All, all my joy, my grief, my love are thine!

* From *Ardours and Endurances* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1918).

THE MAN WITH THE HOE *

*(Written after seeing Millet's world-famous painting)**Edwin Markham*

Bowed by the weight of centuries he leans
 Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground,
 The emptiness of ages in his face,
 And on his back the burden of the world.
 Who made him dead to rapture and despair,
 A thing that grieves not and that never hopes,
 Stolid and stunned, a brother to the ox?
 Who loosened and let down this brutal jaw?
 Whose was the hand that slanted back this brow?
 Whose breath blew out the light within this brain?

Is this the Thing the Lord God made and gave
 To have dominion over sea and land;
 To trace the stars and search the heavens for power;
 To feel the passion of Eternity?
 Is this the dream He dreamed who shaped the suns
 And marked their ways upon the ancient deep?
 Down all the caverns of Hell to their last gulf
 There is no shape more terrible than this—
 More tongued with censure of the world's blind greed—
 More filled with signs and portents for the soul—
 More packt with danger to the universe.

What gulfs between him and the seraphim!
 Slave of the wheel of labor, what to him
 Are Plato and the swing of Pleiades?
 What the long reaches of the peaks of song,
 The rift of dawn, the reddening of the rose?
 Through this dread shape the suffering ages look;
 Time's tragedy is in that aching stoop;
 Through this dread shape humanity betrayed,
 Plundered, profaned, and disinherited,
 Cries protest to the Judges of the World,
 A protest that is also prophecy.

O masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
 Is this the handiwork you give to God,
 This monstrous thing distorted and soul-quenched?

* Copyrighted by the author, and used by his permission.

How will you ever straighten up this shape;
Touch it again with immortality;
Give back the upward looking and the light;
Rebuild in it the music and the dream;
Make right the immemorial infamies,
Perfidious wrongs, immedicable woes?

O masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
How will the Future reckon with this man?
How answer his brute question in that hour
When whirlwinds of rebellion shake all shores?
How will it be with kingdoms and with kings—
With those who shaped him to the thing he is—
When this dumb terror shall rise to judge the world,
After the silence of the centuries?

THE PURIFICATION *

Richard Church

They have gone over, the god, the
friend, the lover,
They have gone over.
It is growing gray now;
There comes the end of day now.

They were signs then, the stars were
a glory for men,
They were signs then.
Those lights flare unseen now,
Things paltry and mean now.

They were true pleasure, the friendly
trust, the praise without measure.
They were true pleasure.
Praise is an empty sound now.
Trust treads no firm ground now.

They were music, joy, and truth, the
kisses she gave him in youth.
They were music, joy, and truth.
They are less beautiful now;
They are but dutiful now.

* By permission of the author.

READING ALOUD

Aye, they have come to an end, the
 god, the lover, the friend;
 They have come to an end.
 The soul is alone now:
 Strong, naked, full-grown now.

SONG OF THE OPEN ROAD *

Walt Whitman

1

Afoot and light-hearted I take to the open road,
 Healthy, free, the world before me,
 The long brown path before me leading wherever I choose.

Henceforth I ask not good-fortune, I myself am good-fortune,
 Henceforth I whimper no more, postpone no more; need nothing,
 Done with indoor complaints, libraries, querulous criticisms,
 Strong and content I travel the open road.

The earth, that is sufficient,
 I do not want the constellations any nearer,
 I know they are very well where they are,
 I know they suffice for those who belong to them.

(Still here I carry my old delicious burdens,
 I carry them, men and women, I carry them with me wherever I go,
 I swear it is impossible for me to get rid of them,
 I am fill'd with them, and I will fill them in return.)

.

5

From this hour I ordain myself loos'd of limits and imaginary lines,
 Going where I list, my own master total and absolute,
 Listening to others, considering well what they say,
 Pausing, searching, receiving, contemplating,
 Gently, but with undeniable will, divesting myself of the holds that
 would hold me.

I inhale great draughts of space,
 The east and the west are mine, and the north and the south are mine.

* From *Leaves of Grass* (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1924).

I am larger, better than I thought,
I did not know I held so much goodness.

All seems beautiful to me,
I can repeat over to men and women, You have done such good to me
 I would do the same to you,
I will recruit for myself and you as I go,
I will scatter myself among men and women as I go,
I will toss a new gladness and roughness among them,
Whoever denies me it shall not trouble me,
Whoever accepts me he or she shall be blessed and shall bless me.

.

9

Allons! whoever you are come travel with me!
Travelling with me you find what never tires.

The earth never tires,
The earth is rude, silent, incomprehensible at first, Nature is rude
 and incomprehensible at first,
Be not discouraged, keep on, there are divine things well envelop'd.
I swear to you there are divine things more beautiful than words
 can tell.

.

15

Allons! the road is before us!
It is safe—I have tried it—my own feet have tried it well—be not
 detain'd!
Let the paper remain on the desk unwritten, and the book on the
 shelf unopen'd!
Let the tools remain in the workshop! let the money remain
 unearn'd!
Let the school stand! mind not the cry of the teacher!
Let the preacher preach in his pulpit! let the lawyer plead in the
 court, and the judge expound the law.

Camerado, I give you my hand!
I give you my love more precious than money,
I give you myself before preaching or law;
Will you give me yourself? will you come travel with me?
Shall we stick by each other as long as we live?

READING ALOUD

DEATH CAROL *

From WHEN LILACS LAST IN THE DOORYARD BLOOM'D

Walt Whitman

Come lovely and soothing death,
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving,
In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
Sooner or later delicate death.

Prais'd be the fathomless universe,
For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious,
And for love, sweet love—but praise! praise! praise!
For the sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding death.

Dark mother always gliding near with soft feet,
Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome?
Then I chant it for thee, I glorify thee above all,
I bring thee a song that when thou must indeed come, come
unfalteringly.

Approach strong deliveress,
When it is so, when thou hast taken them I joyously sing the dead,
Lost in the loving floating ocean of thee,
Laved in the flood of thy bliss, O death.

From me to thee glad serenades,
Dances for thee I propose saluting thee, adornments and feastings
for thee,
And the sights of the open landscape and the high-spread sky are
fitting,
And life and the fields, and the huge and thoughtful night.

The night in silence under many a star,
The ocean shore and the husky whispering wave whose voice I know,
And the soul turning to thee, O vast and well-veil'd death,
And the body gratefully nestling close to thee.

Over the tree-tops I float thee a song,
Over the rising and sinking waves, over the myriad fields and the
prairies wide,
Over the dense-pack'd cities all and the teeming wharves and ways,
I float this carol with joy, with joy to thee, O death.

* From *Leaves of Grass* (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1924).

A BIRD'S LAMENT FOR HIS MATE *

*From OUT OF THE CRADLE ENDLESSLY ROCKING**Walt Whitman*

Soothe! soothe! soothe!

Close on its waves soothes the wave behind,
And again another behind embracing and lapping, every one close,
But my love soothes not me, not me.

Low hangs the moon, it rose late,
It is lagging—O I think it is heavy with love, with love.
O madly the sea pushes upon the land,
With love, with love.

O night! do I not see my love fluttering out among the breakers?
What is that little black thing I see there in the white?

Loud! loud! loud!

Loud I call to you, my love!
High and clear I shoot my voice over the waves,
Surely you must know who is here, is here,
You must know who I am, my love.

Low-hanging moon!
What is that dusky spot in your brown yellow?
O it is the shape, the shape of my mate!
O moon, do not keep her from me any longer.

Land! land! O land!

Whichever way I turn, O I think you could give me my mate back
again if you only would,
For I am almost sure I see her dimly whichever way I look.
O rising stars!
Perhaps the one I want so much will rise, will rise with some of you.

O throat! O trembling throat!
Sound clearer through the atmosphere!
Pierce the woods, the earth,
Somewhere listening to catch you must be the one I want.
Shake out carols!
Solitary here, the night's carols!
Carols of lonesome love! death's carols!
Carols under that lagging, yellow, waning moon!
O under that moon where she droops almost down into the sea!
O reckless despairing carols.

* From *Leaves of Grass* (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1924).

But soft! sink low!
Soft! let me just murmur,
And do you wait a moment you husky-nois'd sea,
For somewhere I believe I heard my mate responding to me,
So faint, I must be still, be still to listen,
But not altogether still, for then she might not come immediately
to me.

Hither my love!
Here I am! here!
With this just-sustain'd note I announce myself to you,
This gentle call is for you my love, for you.

Do not be decoy'd elsewhere,
That is the whistle of the wind, it is not my voice,
That is the fluttering, the fluttering of the spray,
Those are the shadows of leaves.

O darkness! O in vain!
O I am very sick and sorrowful.

O brown halo in the sky near the moon, drooping upon the sea!
O troubled reflection in the sea!
O throat! O throbbing heart!
And I singing uselessly, uselessly all the night.

O past! O happy life! O songs of joy!
In the air, in the woods, over fields,
Loved! loved! loved! loved! loved!
But my mate no more, no more with me!
We two together no more.

A CONSECRATION *

John Masefield

Not of the princes and prelates with periwigged charioteers
Riding triumphantly laureled to lap the fat of the years,—
Rather the scorned—the rejected—the men hemmed in with
the spears;

The men of the tattered battalion which fights till it dies,
Dazed with the dust of the battle, the din and the cries,

* From *Poems*, copyright by The Macmillan Co., and used with their permission.

The men with the broken heads and the blood running into
their eyes.

Not the be-medaled Commander, beloved of the throne,
Riding cock-horse to parade when the bugles are blown,
But the lads who carried the koppie and cannot be known.

Not the ruler for me, but the ranker, the tramp of the road,
The slave with the sack on his shoulders pricked on with the goad,
The man with too weighty a burden, too weary a load.

The sailor, the stoker of steamers, the man with the clout,
The chantyman bent at the halliards putting a tune to the shout,
The drowsy man at the wheel and the tired look-out.

Others may sing of the wine and the wealth and the mirth,
The portly presence of potentates goodly in girth;—
Mine be the dirt and the dross, the dust and scum of the earth!

Theirs be the music, the color, the glory, the gold;
Mine be a handful of ashes, a mouthful of mold.
Of the maimed, of the halt and the blind in the rain and the
cold—

Of these shall my songs be fashioned, my tales be told.

Amen.

BRAVE NEW WORLD *

Archibald MacLeish

But you, Thomas Jefferson,
You could not lie so still,
You could not bear the weight of stone
On the quiet hill,

You could not keep your green grown peace
Nor hold your folded hand
If you could see your new world now,
Your new sweet land.

There was a time, Tom Jefferson,
When freedom made free men.
The new found earth and the new freed mind
Were brothers then.

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READING ALOUD

There was a time when tyrants feared
The new world of the free.
Now freedom is afraid and shrieks
At tyranny.

Words have not changed their sense so soon
Nor tyranny grown new.
The truths you held, Tom Jefferson,
Will still hold true.

What's changed is freedom in this age.
What great men dared to choose
Small men now dare neither win
Nor lose.

Freedom, when men fear freedom's use
But love its useful name,
Has cause and cause enough for fear
And cause for shame.

We fought a war in freedom's name
And won it in our own.
We fought to free a world and raised
A wall of stone.

Your countrymen who could have built
The hill fires of the free
To set the dry world all ablaze
With liberty—

To burn the brutal thorn in Spain
Of bigotry and hate
And the dead lie and the brittle weed
Beyond the Plate:

Who could have heaped the bloody straw,
The dung of time, to light
The Danube in a sudden flame
Of hope by night—

Your countrymen who could have hurled
Their freedom like a brand
Have cupped it to a candle spark
In a frightened hand.

Freedom that was a thing to use
They've made a thing to save

And staked it in and fenced it round
Like a dead man's grave.

You, Thomas Jefferson,
You could not lie so still,
You could not bear the weight of stone
On your green hill,

You could not hold your angry tongue
If you could see how bold
The old stale bitter world plays new—
And the new world old.

THE HEAVY BEAR WHO GOES WITH ME *

"the withness of the body"—WHITEHEAD

Delmore Schwartz

The heavy bear who goes with me,
A manifold honey to smear his face,
Clumsy and lumbering here and there,
The central ton of every place,
The hungry beating brutish one
In love with candy, anger, and sleep,
Crazy factotum, dishevelling all,
Climbs the building, kicks the football,
Boxes his brother in the hate-ridden city.

Breathing at my side, that heavy animal,
That heavy bear who sleeps with me,
Howls in his sleep for a world of sugar,
A sweetness intimate as the water's clasp,
Howls in his sleep because the tight-rope
Trembles and shows the darkness beneath.
—The strutting show-off is terrified,
Dressed in his dress-suit, bulging his pants,
Trembles to think that his quivering meat
Must finally wince to nothing at all.

That inescapable animal walks with me,
Has followed me since the black womb held,
Moves where I move, distorting my gesture,
A caricature, a swollen shadow,

* By permission of the author.

READING ALOUD

A stupid clown of the spirit's motive,
 Perplexes and affronts with his own darkness,
 The secret life of belly and bone,
 Opaque, too near, my private, yet unknown,
 Stretches to embrace the very dear
 With whom I would talk without him near,
 Touches her grossly, although a word
 Would bare my heart and make me clear,
 Stumbles, flounders, and strives to be fed
 Dragging me with him in his mouthing care,
 Amid the hundred million of his kind,
 The scrimmage of appetite everywhere.

ELEGY JUST IN CASE *

John Ciardi

Here lie Ciardi's pearly bones
 In their ripe organic mess.
 Jungle blown, his chromosomes
 Breed to a new address.

Progenies of orchids seek
 The fracture's white spilled lymph.
 And his heart's red valve will leak
 Fountains for a protein nymph.

Was it bullets or a wind
 Or a rip-cord fouled on Chance?
 Artifacts the natives find
 Decorate them when they dance.

Here lies the sgt.'s mortal wreck
 Lily spiked and termite kissed,
 Spiders pendant from his neck,
 Beetles shining on his wrist.

Bring the tic and southern flies
 Where the land crabs run unmourning
 Through a night of jungle skies
 To a climeless morning.

* From *Mid-Century American Poets*, copyright, 1950, by John Ciardi; reprinted by permission of Twayne Publishers, Inc.

And bring the chalked eraser here
Fresh from rubbing out his name.
Burn the crew-board for a bier.
(Also Colonel what's-his-name.)

Let no dice be stored and still.
Let no poker deck be torn.
But pour the smuggled rye until
The barracks threshold is outworn.

File the papers, pack the clothes,
Send the coded word through air:
"We regret and no one knows
Where the sgt. goes from here."

"Missing as of inst. oblige,
Deepest sorrow and remain . . ."
Shall I grin at persiflage?
Could I have my skin again

Would I choose a business form
Stilted mute as a giraffe,
Or a pinstripe unicorn
On a cashier's epitaph?

Darling, darling, just in case
Rivets fail or engines burn,
I forget the time and place
But your flesh was sweet to learn.

In the grammar of not yet
Let me name one verb for chance,
Scholarly to one regret:
That I leave your mood and tense.

Swift and single as a shark
I have seen you churn my sleep.
Now if beetles hunt my dark
What will beetles find to keep?

Fractured meat and open bone—
Nothing single or surprised.
Fragments of a written stone
Undeciphered but surmised.

EVENING MEAL IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY *

John Holmes

How is it I can eat bread here and cut meat,
And in quiet shake salt, speak of the meal,
Pour water, serve my son's small plate?
Here now I love well my wife's gold hair combed,
Her voice, her violin, our books on shelves in another room,
The tall chest shining darkly in supper-light.
I have read tonight
The sudden meaningless foreign violent death
Of a nation we both loved, hope
For a country not ours killed. But blacker than print:
For the million people no hope now. For me
A new hurt to the old health of the heart once more:
That sore, that heavy, that dull and I think now incurable
Pain:
Seeing love hated, seeing real death,
Knowing evil alive I was taught was conquered.
How shall I cut this bread gladly, unless more share
The day's meals I earn?
Or offer my wife meat from our fire, our fortune?
It should not have taken me so long to learn.
But how can I speak aloud at my own table tonight
And not curse my own food, not cry out death,
And not frighten my young son?

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Chapter 12

IMPERSONATION

Socrates and Ion. "Why is it, Socrates," said the youthful rhapsode, Ion, "that I lose attention and go to sleep and have absolutely no ideas, when any one speaks of any other poet; but when Homer is mentioned, I wake up at once and am all attention and have plenty to say?"¹

Socrates was trying to learn whether this young interpreter of poetry could help him discover the germs of an art of interpretation. And it must be allowed that any one who sets himself up as an interpreter should understand the principles or rules of art by which he is governed. A musician who pretends to interpret compositions for the violin should be able to play Brahms as well as Mozart, because he should be governed by well-understood rules of expression. An actor of Shakespeare should also be able to act parts from other dramatists, for if acting is an art at all, it is *one* art; there is not an art of acting Shakespeare, and another art of acting Molière, and another art of acting Barrie. If the principles governing the art of acting are understood, and if the technique of acting is acquired, the actor should be able to give a creditable performance of any suitable part from any dramatist.

But this glittering youth, Ion, a professional elocutionist, who astonishes audiences by his prodigious memory and his great emotional power, is incapable of following a logical argument, and cannot define or explain or understand the art by which he makes his living. So Socrates suggests that he is able to interpret Homer

¹ See Appendix, p. 551.

only through some divine madness: "Not by art or by knowledge about Homer do you say what you say, but by divine inspiration and by possession."

Ion is pleased at the notion of being inspired by the gods, but insists that he is not mad, so Socrates tries again. And in this second attempt to discover the nature of the art of which Ion is master, he raises questions particularly pertinent to our study of that branch of interpretation which is called impersonation, and which includes acting.

"Will the rhapsode know better than the pilot what the ruler of a sea-tossed vessel ought to say?" he asks.

Ion answers No.

"And will the rhapsode know better than the cowherd what he ought to say in order to soothe the rage of infuriated cows?"

Again Ion is compelled to answer No.

Now suppose we change the question slightly and apply it to the modern reader or actor. Suppose we have a play which has a part for a cowherd, or, let us say, a truck driver. Will an actor know better than a cowherd or a truck driver how a truck driver or a cowherd should act and speak? If you were the director of such a play and wished to give such a part the very best representation that it was possible to secure, would you go to the farm for a *real* cowherd? Would you go to the city streets for a *real* truck driver? Or would you go to a theatrical agency for a professional actor?

If interpretation is really an art, then there must be principles by which it is governed, and, perhaps, a method by which it can be taught.

This leads us to several more specific questions, and for these we shall try in this chapter to find an answer. May the interpreter of the works of a poet or playwright be called an artist?² What is the nature of the art of which Ion was master? May an interpreter be inspired, as Socrates suggests? And if so, in what sense? Is such inspiration a substitute for study, or for technique? Can an interpreter "speak well" about things of which he has no knowledge? How does the art of reading differ from the art of acting? What problems of interpretation does dramatic poetry add to those of lyric poetry?

² Aristotle said that when actors call themselves artists they are **employing** a metaphor. *Rhetoric* iii, 2.

New problems in dramatic poetry. Perhaps we had best begin with the last of these questions. What new problems do we face as we take up that type of poetry called dramatic? If you look at a typical dramatic monologue by Robert Browning you are at once aware that the words seem to be not those of the poet, but of some other person. You will notice also that this person does not seem to be sitting at a desk composing a poem, but that he is engaged in some other activity, is perhaps mastered by some strange passion, and talking to a second person, who seems to reply, but whose replies are not recorded. How are we to interpret such a poem? Can we say that we are interpreting Browning when quite obviously Browning is not speaking? When we read Wordsworth's sonnet, "The world is too much with us," we felt that we were expressing Wordsworth's own feelings, and expressing feelings such as we ourselves had often experienced. But in Browning's strange "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" we find the expression of a malignant hatred, a petty jealousy, and a hypocritical devotion to monastic forms, such as we have never experienced, and such as we do not like to believe Browning ever experienced either. He himself says that these poems are "so many utterances of so many imaginary persons, not mine."³ What we must seek in our study, then, is the thought and feeling and imagery, not of the poet, but of these imaginary persons whom he has set before us.

It is evident that we shall need all the operations hitherto employed, and that in addition we must discover the kind of person who is speaking, and the situation in which he finds himself; that we must speak not as a normal person in a normal situation, but often as an abnormal person in a very unusual situation.

Interpretation as an art. Let us seek an answer to Socrates' question as to the nature of the art which Ion practiced so well. The fundamental principles that govern the fine arts were defined in Chapter 9. There we found that all arts are in some form *imitation of nature*, that an artist by his penetrating insight into the nature of men and things reveals to us their form and essence, gives us an ideal copy of reality. This definition we can apply readily enough to the sculptor, the painter, the poet, but what about the interpreter of literature? Can he be regarded as a creative artist,

³ Preface to *Dramatic Lyrics* (London: 1842).

an imitator of nature? Does he not merely re-present what another artist has already created? His text is prescribed for him and he cannot change it. Is he not merely an imitator at second hand, an imitator of an imitator? (See the figure of the suspended rings in Plato's *Ion*.)

An interpreter is indeed limited by the work he attempts to interpret. He cannot push the author off the page and substitute a creation of his own. But all artists are restricted in some degree by the subjects they choose, the materials they work with, the necessary dimensions of the proposed work, etc. The sculptor's horse must be recognizable as a horse; the painter's rose must be painted on canvas. And so the interpreter, though bound by his author's words, adds voice and gesture to them and has thereby his own media of expression, and through these media considerable latitude for creative activity. Various actors may create a variety of Hamlets, all essentially true to Shakespeare's conception, but each the product of the actor's individual art. The actor does more than pronounce words. He penetrates through the words to the ideal type which the dramatist tried to put upon paper, and, using the author's words together with his own media of voice and gesture, creates or re-creates a new and different art product.

In this representation it is possible that the actor will be more successful than the dramatist. Note again Diderot's statement quoted in Chapter 9. "Sometimes," he said, "the poet feels more deeply than the actor; sometimes, and perhaps oftener, the actor's conception is stronger than the poet's, and there is nothing truer than Voltaire's exclamation when he heard Clairon in a piece of his, '*Did I really write that?*' Does Clairon know more about it than Voltaire? Anyhow, at that moment the ideal type in the speaking of the part went well beyond the poet's ideal in the writing of it. But this ideal type was not Clairon. Where, then, lay her talent? In imagining a mighty shape and in copying it with genius."⁴

Talma, the great French actor, said that the actor's imagination "associates him with the inspiration of the poet, transports him back to the past, and enables him to look on at the lives of historical personages or the impassioned figures created by genius—reveals to him, as though by magic, their physiognomy, their heroic stature,

⁴ Denis Diderot, *The Paradox of Acting*, trans. W. H. Pollock (London: Chatto & Windus, 1883), p. 55.

their language, their habits, all the shades of their character, all the movements of their soul." ⁵

What is true of acting is also true of the interpretation of lyric poetry. An interpreter of Wordsworth's sonnets is bound by the poet's words. But he may and should go back of the words to the natural objects and human moods which inspired the poet, and so re-create for us in his medium of spoken words and gesture what the poet has created in written words. By the power of his imagination he may develop a feeling as genuine as the poet's, may even go beyond it and reveal depths unfelt by the poet himself.

Art is not reality. Now let us notice some implications from this theory of artistic imitation, implications important for the interpreter as for all artists. A work of art, says Butcher,⁶ reproduces its original not as it is in itself, but as it appears to the senses. It is concerned with outward appearances, it employs illusions, it does not attempt to embody the objective reality of things, but only their sensible appearances. A work of art is not an attempt to create a literal likeness that will be taken for nature's original. A sculptor, for instance, does not try to deceive us into believing that his stone lion is a real lion. The pretty story of an ancient painter who made his fruit so lifelike that the birds came and pecked at it is a story for children, not for the sophisticated. As we saunter through a gallery of sculpture or portraits we are not looking for real people but for *images* of people.

In neither lyric nor dramatic poetry should the reader try to trick his audience into thinking that he is someone other than himself. It is sometimes said that when one is interpreting Tennyson he should do his best to give the impression that Tennyson is speaking. That is surely a naïve conception of art. One might imply from it that a really conscientious interpreter of Tennyson would try to discover the poet's mannerisms of speech and gesture, how he looked and what he wore, and would do best when he imitated Tennyson's voice, and appeared in the long beard and mid-Victorian dress characteristic of the man. Such a notion further ignores the fact that poets are often very poor interpreters of their own works. But

⁵ François Joseph Talma, *Reflexions on the Actor's Art* (New York: Dramatic Museum of Columbia University, 1915), p. 17.

⁶ S. H. Butcher, *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art* (London: The Macmillan Co., 1895), pp. 126-27.

the chief defect in it is that it assumes that poets write merely to express themselves, and not to express some universal truth, and that our aim in reading should be not to represent what the poet says, but to represent *him*.

And it is just as bad a mistake to suppose that in reading a dramatic poem one should try to make the audience believe that the character represented is speaking. Not even in a play is it expected by any but the naïve that the actors are attempting to trick the audience into believing they are the characters whom they represent.

But in the theatre many otherwise intelligent persons do look for reality. It happens that the actor's medium of expression is identical with the product he creates. His medium is himself—his own body, voice, action, and emotion. And in this medium he creates for us a man with body, voice, action, and emotion. Hence it is that persons who would not expect to be startled by Rosa Bonheur's lion, or who do not expect to be tempted to smell the flowers painted upon canvas, *do* expect to feel that action upon the stage is *real* life, and not an imitation of life. As Stark Young says, "They think that an actor's greatest triumph consists in making us think him some other person than himself. They prefer sometimes when he has died on the stage to have an actor remain out of sight and not return to bow before them with a smile on his face. People who insist on such deception and identity should frequent the dog and pony show. There they would see perfect naturalness, perfect illusion. Rover does not indeed act dog. He *is* dog. It is by just this exactly that such critics of acting show what mere babies they are so far as art goes."⁷

If the stage did give us real life instead of an imitation of life, we should not find it pleasing. Says Diderot, "An unhappy, a really unhappy woman, may weep and fail to touch you; worse yet, some trivial disfigurement in her may incline you to laughter; the accent which is apt to her is to your ear dissonant and vexatious; a movement which is habitual to her makes her grief show ignobly and sulkily to you; almost all the violent passions lend themselves to grimaces which a tasteless artist will copy but too faithfully, and which a great actor will avoid."⁸

⁷ Stark Young, *Theatre Practice* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), p. 7.

⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 23.

The other arts have definite means of preserving this consciousness of artistic detachment which Langfeld has called aesthetic distance.⁹ The painter encloses his picture in a frame, the sculptor places his statue upon a pedestal, the dramatist may employ blank verse, the dramatic producer has us see the play through a proscenium arch. But to the actor such definite means of detachment are denied. In modern times he may not even wear a mask. But he must by some means preserve a distance from reality. The actor or the interpretative reader cannot stand on a pedestal, or speak through a frame. He can, of course, when it is provided for him, make use of poetic meter to create aesthetic distance; but he must depend in general upon idealizing his material, and he does this by avoiding a lifelike copy of reality. Even if he should be called upon to play a part very much like himself, he must not be himself. He must, in order to imitate in the Aristotelian sense, abstract and refine from his habitual behavior those features which are typical of himself, or of the character he is representing. He must eliminate what is trivial, accidental, and nonsignificant. Since every intonation and gesture becomes a part of his artistic product as perceived by the audience, he must exercise a rigorous censorship over them to see that only those are permitted which have significance, which are meaningful and necessary in communicating character, feeling and incident. He must avoid the vague watery movement characteristic of real life. On the stage it would be not merely wasteful of attention, but distracting and confusing. He must learn to move only when movement has significance, and he must understand that every gesture and intonation on the stage has a thousandfold intensified significance.

The artist's individuality. If this seems to imply that there is no place for the artist's individuality, so much the better. Much harm has been done by the unfortunate modern doctrine of self-expression—the doctrine that the function of art is merely to relieve the artist of some personal complex. It is never safe for the young actor or reader to fall back upon a mere "That's the way I feel about the passage," or "That's the way I think it ought to be read." A great art is universal, rather than personal. In all the history of civiliza-

⁹ Herbert Sidney Langfeld, *The Aesthetic Attitude* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1920).

tion you will hardly find a single great artist who was an eccentric genius, and who allowed his eccentricity to express itself in his art. The purpose and meaning of art are lost if the actor obtrudes his own personality upon us. In acting, as in painting or in poetry, we want the artist to reveal the true forms of objects, to show us aspects of things, to reveal depths, that our untrained and uninspired faculties cannot discover.

The obtrusion of the artist's personality is particularly obnoxious and lamentably prevalent in the arts of interpretation. Public readings are too often merely personal exhibitions of the reader's powers. On the stage the evil is so bad that Gordon Craig would like to get rid of the actor altogether, and put in his place an inanimate puppet, an *Ueber-marionette*. It is bad art, he says, "to make so personal, so emotional, an appeal that the beholder forgets the thing itself while swamped by the personality, the emotion, of its maker." He quotes Napoleon as saying that we should see the hero as "a statue in which the weakness and the tremors of the flesh are no longer perceptible." "Do away with the real tree," he says, "do away with the reality of delivery, do away with the reality of action, and you tend to do away with the actor. This is what must come to pass in time. . . . Do away with the actor, and you do away with the means by which a debased stage-realism is produced and flourishes. No longer would there be a living figure to confuse us into connecting actuality and art; no longer a living figure in which the weakness and tremors of the flesh were perceptible."¹⁰

Whether the actor should "be himself" in giving way to the emotions of his part is a controversial question which we need not discuss further here, except to point out that if an actor is giving way to emotion he is not imitating emotion.¹¹ Art is not life but an idealization of life.

Idealization. Just how does an artist treat a real fact, or incident, or emotion, or trait of character, in order to idealize or universalize it? Unfortunately there is no rule of thumb. Would that

¹⁰ Gordon Craig, *On the Art of the Theatre* (Chicago: Browne's Bookstore, 1911), p. 81.

¹¹ Students interested in the matter should read William Archer, *Masks or Faces?* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1888) and Diderot, *Paradox* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1883). The controversy is well summarized in John Dolman, *The Art of Play Production* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1911), p. 280 ff.

there were! If there is any secret of artistic production it lies just here. This was the mystery that baffled Ion, and also, seemingly, Socrates, who was content to attribute the miraculous powers of the artist to the inspiration of the muses. We cannot hope to get very far toward the solution of the mystery, but it will be helpful at least to note how some artists and students of aesthetics have regarded the phenomenon.

"By an exhibition of what is universal or typical," said Aristotle, "is meant the representation of what a certain type of person is likely or is bound to say or do in a given situation."¹² Butcher says the poet "seizes and reproduces a concrete fact, but transfigures it so that the higher truth, the idea of the universal shines through it."¹³ And let us note again his statement that art "eliminates what is transient and particular and reveals the permanent and essential features of the original." This poetic idealization we are familiar with in Wordsworth's simple lyrics of pastoral life. The same obligation to idealize concrete fact is commonly recognized by the best writers on the theatre. It was one of Goethe's rules of acting that the player "must not only imitate nature, but must also present her ideally."¹⁴ Hamlet's advice to the players agrees in substance, for he says that in holding the mirror up to nature, they are to represent not actual scorn or actual virtue, but the *image*, the *form* of these objects: "Show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure."

Another great French actor, Coquelin, defined art thus: "What is art, and what do we understand by it, if not the interpretation of nature and of truth, more or less tinged by a peculiar light, which does not alter the proportions, but yet marks the salient features, heightens their colors, displays their fidelity to nature, so that our minds are more deeply and forcibly affected by them?"¹⁵

Diderot gives a fuller and more helpful explanation: "Reflect a little as to what, in the language of the theatre, is *being true*. Is it showing things as they are in nature? Certainly not. Were it so, the true would be the commonplace. What, then, is truth for stage

¹² *Poetics*, 9.

¹³ *Op. cit.*, p. 197.

¹⁴ Arthur Woehl, "Goethe's Rules for Actors," *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education*, XIII (1927), p. 255.

¹⁵ Constant Coquelin, *Art and the Actor* (New York: Dramatic Museum of Columbia University, 1915), p. 34.

purposes? It is the conforming of action, diction, face, voice, movement, and gesture, to an ideal type invented by the poet, and frequently enhanced by the player. . . . This type not only influences the tone, it alters the actor's very walk and bearing. . . .

"We would have this heroine fall with a becoming grace, that hero die like a gladiator of old in the midst of the arena to the applause of the circus, with a noble grace, with a fine and picturesque attitude. And who will execute this design of ours? The athlete who is mastered by pain, shattered by his own sensibility, or the athlete who is trained, who has self-control, who, as he breathes his last sigh, remembers the lessons of the gymnasium? Neither the gladiator of old nor the great actor dies as people die in their beds; it is for them to show us another sort of death, a death to move us; and the critical spectator will feel that the bare truth, the unadorned fact, would seem despicable and out of harmony with the poetry of the rest."¹⁶

The artist's method. Now let us return to Socrates' question: Will the rhapsode know better than the cowherd how he ought to speak in order to soothe the rage of infuriated cows? Or we may ask: Will an actor know better than a gladiator how a gladiator ought to die? Ion in his innocence answered No. But in the light of what has been said above we may answer in full confidence: Yes, the interpreter *will* know better than a cowherd how a cowherd should speak, and better than a gladiator how a gladiator should die. If he is a real artist he will discover the very form or pattern toward which an emotion tends, "the result which nature strives to attain but rarely or never can attain." As Joshua Reynolds said, "he corrects nature by herself, her imperfect state by her more perfect." "This great ideal perfection and beauty," he said again, "are not to be sought in the heavens, but upon the earth." Ion was flattered to believe that his talent came from heaven, from the muses (though indirectly, through his master, Homer). And this flattering belief is all too common today among young readers and actors. How glorious to believe that you are a darling of the gods, that you have within you a miraculous gift, which others can only envy, and which enables you to create spontaneously the divinest miracles of art! It is this doctrine that bars the path to many a young artist's growth.

¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, pp. 22, 23.

We must allow, upon the testimony of some of the best minds from Plato down to the present, that there is such a thing as inspiration, and fortunate indeed is the artist who possesses it. But no great artist has ever depended solely upon it. Instead of looking to heaven, always he has looked closely at the earth, at the natural objects which he seeks to imitate. And the method by which he discovers the perfect form of a tree, or the characteristic walk of an old man, or the typical grief of a girl, or the ideal voice and gesture of a cowherd, a teamster, or a gladiator, is just the method with which we began our study of reading—*long, patient observation*.

Horace understood the matter well. "Whether by genius or by art an excellent poem is produced," he said, "has long been a question: but I do not see what can be done by study without a rich vein of intellect, nor by genius when uncultivated: so true is it that either requires the help of either, and that the two combine in friendly union. He who passionately desires to reach in the race the goal, must first endure and do much as a boy, suffer from cold and toil, abstain from love and wine; he who at the Pythian games sings to the flute, has first been to school and feared a master."¹⁷

The same blending of inspiration and study was thus described by Talma as it applies to the art of the actor: "In the first place, by repeated exercises, he enters deeply into the emotions, and his speech acquires the accent proper to the situation of the personages he has to represent. This done, he goes to the theatre [presumably for rehearsal] not only to give theatrical effect to his studies, but also to yield himself to spontaneous flashes of his sensibility and all the emotions which it involuntarily produces in him. What does he then do? In order that his inspiration may not be lost, his memory, in the silence of repose, recalls the accent of his voice, the expression of his features, his action,—in a word, the spontaneous workings of his mind, which he had suffered to have free course, and, in effect, everything which in the movements of his exaltation contributed to the effect he had produced. His intelligence then passes all these means in review, correcting them and fixing them in his memory, to reemploy them in succeeding representations. By this kind of labor the intelligence accumulates and preserves all the creations of sensibility."¹⁸

¹⁷ Horace *Ars poetica* 408–15.

¹⁸ *Op. cit.*, pp. 22–23.

We find substantially the same method described by Stark Young: "The process of art is one of alternate inspiration and memory. As the artist works and as he returns again and again to the work, he discovers in himself something that seems suddenly to forward the conception and revelation that his art undertakes. This happy something, often not consciously expected or prepared for, he will recognize, and will strive to remember in order that he may revive it. And so, with one discovery and invention after another, and the memorizing and repeating of them, he may bring into his final expression of the moment such radiant elements as may best create it into a form of art. Among these radiant elements there will be some that are gestures, visible bodies of the ideas working in him, and these, too, he will memorize and repeat."¹⁹

May we not conclude, then, that partly by inspiration and partly by long patient study, the interpreter will discover the essential form, or soul, or *gestalt* of the character, or action, or emotion which he is imitating, and represent it, after repeated trial and criticism, to his audience? In the words of another experienced actor, "We must generalize and abstract, and not mistake the accident for the essence. . . . We must follow the method of men of science who compare and observe a great number of specimens until they discover one note. . . . It is only long, patient, minute observation that will discover for us what points are common to every specimen. This, then, is the method that all our great actors, consciously or unconsciously, follow, and it is the only method."²⁰

The effect of acting on character. When the art of interpretation is thus understood, it escapes pretty largely the criticism of Plato and a host of others since his time that to pretend to be some one other than oneself is unbecoming the dignity of a free man, destructive of character, and degrading to morals. If one attempts to *be* Macbeth, to live the life of Macbeth, to deceive himself and his audience into believing that he *is* Macbeth, he may indeed violate his own character and damage his moral nature. But if he is trying

¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 65. Note that this description seems to scant the possibility of conscious design, of preconceived plan in art, and lays unnecessary stress on the method of trial and error. Note also that both Stark Young and Talma are discussing the method by which the actor studies his *own* responses, rather than those of others.

²⁰ Percy Fitzgerald, *The Art of Acting* (New York: The Macmillan Co. 1892), pp. 70, 90.

only to *represent* Macbeth, or some other evil character, he should suffer little more harm than does the artist who tries to paint him upon canvas. I say "little more" because it must be allowed that the peculiar medium employed by the interpreter, the use of his own voice and body instead of an inanimate brush or pencil or chisel, does subject him to more danger from this source than other artists. But one need not always play villainous parts, and if one remembers that he should not try to be, but merely to represent, the character whom he portrays, the danger of moral corruption is negligible.

The relation of reading to acting. One question remains of those raised at the beginning of this chapter: How does the art of reading differ from the art of acting? Elaborate and somewhat artificial distinctions have sometimes been set up between reading and impersonation, and between impersonation and acting, as if they were quite distinct arts. But it must be apparent that they differ not at all in the means by which they imitate, or in the objects which they represent. All are forms of interpretative art, in which the artist is limited by the text of his author, and all employ as a medium, voice and some degree of gesture or action.

A scene from *As You Like It* may be read informally, or it may be acted in costume, with lights and scenery, or it may be done in any number of gradations in between. A teacher sitting in her chair in the classroom, with no theatrical aids, may give her class as much of the essential truth of a play or a character as an actress upon the stage.

The essential problem of any interpreter is to reveal to us the truth of idea, of character, of incident, of emotion, set down by the poet or playwright. As a medium of expression he may use voice alone, as do radio actors, or action alone, as did motion picture actors, or he may use both, and add to them all, or some, of the devices of the theatre—costume, makeup, setting, lights; and he may add music, as in Grand Opera. But always his task is the same—to represent the truth of the poet's conception.

The question is, What does good sense and good taste demand on the given occasion? How much reality should be supplied by the interpreter, and how much should be left to the imagination of the audience? Costume, makeup, lighting, setting, are merely conventional aids to the spectator's imagination.

Professor Dolman has said that reading differs from acting in that the reader *shows* the play to the audience, while the actor is himself a part of the play. That is true from the standpoint of the director and, perhaps, from that of the audience. The actor is in a difficult situation. He must, while engaged in his own creative activity, serve at the same time as a part of the artistic product of the director. But as an artist he is not part of the play any more than a painter is a part of his picture. As an actor he is an *interpreter* of the play, just as is the reader. And Professor Dolman well says, "An actor must, of course, convey the author's meaning to his audience. He must do more: he must convey a very subtle suggestion of appreciation of that meaning; that is his service as an interpretative artist. He must not appear visibly to enjoy the play as a spectator, yet he must somehow suggest an attitude of enjoyment to the observer. At the same time he must seem to be, not himself, but the character he represents."²¹

The reading of plays. But to say that reading and acting are essentially one art is not to say that they are alike in their outer form and manner. Let us be sure that we understand both their similarities and their differences. These appear most clearly when we consider the proper method of reading scenes from plays.

Play reading and play acting are quite similar so far as the artist's preparation for his task is concerned. They are alike too in the aesthetic effect which he wishes to have on his audience. It is plain also that as imitative artists reader and actor may represent the same subject matter (or object matter); that is, the same play. And they use much the same media of expression, that is, body and voice. But they differ definitely in the manner by which they represent. This difference arises from the fact that *the reader is not a part of the scene which he presents*.

Interpretative reading implies (1) a work of literature, let us say, a play; (2) a hearer, or group of hearers, an audience; and (3) an intermediary who clarifies, illuminates, and intensifies the work of literature for the audience. He is the interpreter. He is a teacher and a critic. He comments on the play. He shows us a scene, with characters in it—persons moving, feeling, and speaking. But he is not part of the scene. He is not one of the characters. Certainly he

²¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 49.

is not all of them by turns. He is, like the novelist, a narrator. Like a novelist he may describe what the characters are like, what they do, and how they speak. There is no reason why he should not tell us at the beginning of a speech who is speaking, and how he is speaking—just as a novelist does. Playwrights also supply descriptions of the action that should accompany the speeches. The interpreter may read these descriptions.

But character, emotion, and action can be suggested also by the reader's voice and gesture. He can comment on a passage by his manner of reading it. But if you as interpreter use this method of comment and description, as you undoubtedly will in reading a play, you must be careful not to attempt to identify yourself with the characters you represent. You want us in the audience to imagine a scene as happening on a stage, or as happening in real life in a given setting. But *you* are *not* on a stage. You are *not* in that setting. You are merely telling about it. The play must take place *in the hearer's mind*.

If the playwright says that a character at a certain point rises from his chair and goes to a window, you can *tell* us about that action, and then speak the character's lines. If you try to rise from a chair where you are not sitting, and go to a window which isn't there, you destroy the illusion. You have taken the picture out of our minds, and made a futile attempt to place it where you are standing, and to put yourself into it. If Juliet leans over the balcony to talk to Romeo, you needn't lean over to represent that action. You are not Juliet, and you shouldn't confuse yourself with her, either in your mind or in ours. You speak her words in such a way as to suggest how she spoke them. But don't take them away from her. We should hear them as coming from her, not from you. You also suggest her action and her feeling, but in this you must not go so far as to make us think of you—of *your* gesticulation and *your* passion, instead of Juliet's. You may "empathize" with her as much as you like. Your facial and bodily muscles may respond to her feeling. But your gestural manifestations and vocal expression should reveal to us only your sympathy with the character you represent. If you make us forget the character and think of *your* emotion and *your* grimaces, you violate both good taste and good art.

Researches in psychology have revealed that all of us do not visualize things in the same place. One person hearing a reading

of this scene between Romeo and Juliet may imagine it as taking place in some theatre with which he is familiar. Another may see it in some vague far-off place that he identifies as Verona. Another may visualize it on his own eyelids, or above his head, or above the reader's head, or in some other more or less definite place. It is probably best to let each hearer see the scene wherever he pleases, though at times it is effective to locate it for him—to your right, or to your left, or behind you. But wherever he visualizes it, it is still a scene in his mind, and must be left in his mind.

In a theatre the place of visualization is fixed upon the stage. There the actors visibly represent the characters of the play. They are dressed for their parts. The setting is designed to imitate or to suggest the scene of the play. We see the action with our own eyes. But when you read from the front of the classroom there is nothing before our eyes to represent the scene of the play. Indeed there is everything to remind us that the scene is not before us. The bare walls and blackboards work against any such illusion. And if you in such a setting try to make us feel that you are a character in the play we cannot escape the incongruity between your acting and the complete absence of an actor's proper environment. Incongruity, it need hardly be added, is the essence of the ridiculous. Do not then try to set before our eyes what we ought to be allowed to keep in our mind's eye. Trust our imagination; don't destroy it. Let us keep the picture in our minds. Don't try to build it around yourself; don't try to put yourself in it. Try rather to *project* it; that is, to throw it out from you.

Acting the part of a single character when you should merely read it is bad enough. But if you try to act two characters at once you completely disrupt our mental image, and the effect is doubly absurd. If you identify yourself with each character in turn you must change your identity so often that we cannot keep up with you. If you first try to make us think you are Juliet looking down from her balcony, and in the next speech Romeo standing on the ground and looking up, you destroy the illusion completely. We ought to see a whole picture, containing both Romeo and Juliet, as we would see it in the Capulets' garden, or on the stage. You should try to show us this picture, and you can't do it if you try to display yourself first as one character and then as the other. You must keep yourself out of the picture in order to keep the picture alive in our imaginations.

Any selection you read should be so thoroughly prepared that it is completely memorized. But most selections, and drama particularly, had better be read from the book. A book in your hand will be a constant reminder to you, and to your hearers, that you are trying to display, not yourself, but a scene from a printed play. Your manner should say to us not, "Here am I. Watch me do my impersonation," but "Here are Romeo and Juliet. Watch them." A book in the hand will help to create and maintain this point of view.

One who wishes to read well will need a taste cultivated by association with cultured people, a sure judgment of what is cheap and meretricious. He will remember Hamlet's warning that the approval of one judicious person should outweigh a whole theatre full of others. It is impossible to lay down laws to govern in all cases the proper degree of impersonation, and the appropriate quantity of emotion and gesticulation. There may, as Quintilian said, be objectionable imitation even in those whose whole art consists in imitation. "Even players," he said, "seem to me to act very injudiciously, who, though representing the part of a young man, yet when, in a narrative, either the speech of an old man, . . . or that of a woman . . . has to be repeated, pronounce it with a tremulous or effeminate voice."²² Those who love the art should be most eager to guard it from the vulgarity and disrepute into which it has too often fallen.

Conclusion. The method of the impersonator, then, if he is to do more than depend weakly upon inspiration, is just the method we have followed in the interpretation of lyric poetry. But instead of representing the truth of the poet's mood, he must represent the moods of what Browning called "imaginary persons." And he must suggest not only their emotions but their characters, their actions, and, at times, a particular setting, and the presence of other persons. To do this he will need to study the text with which the author has supplied him, as explained in previous chapters, and in addition, as he is to imitate nature—human nature—he will need by long patient observation of all sorts of persons, to discover the means by which they reveal their emotions and their characters. The objects he imitates are, as Aristotle said, "men in action," and so, he must learn to observe men in action, especially men of the type he is to represent. And as all good artists have learned from the work of pre-

²² *Institutio oratoria* xi. 3. 91.

ceding artists, the interpreter should study the work of public readers wherever he can hear them, and also the work of actors of the stage, the screen, and the radio. But if he values his own independence and his own development, he will go first to nature, and will seek models in the work of other artists only when he has exhausted his own resources.

Summary. Mastery of the art of interpretation should be governed by well-understood general principles, which should enable one to interpret competently any kind of literature. In dramatic poetry one must interpret not only idea and emotion but also character and situation. The interpreter should not pretend to be the poet or the character whom he represents. The arts are forms of imitation. They do not, however, literally copy natural objects; they represent what is typical, universal, or ideal in them. The dramatic poet and the impersonator imitate men in action—their characters, their emotions, their movements.

The interpreter may create as genuinely as the poet whose work he represents. He should try to give us, not real life, but a representation of life, the appearance or image of life. He should not try to deceive his hearers into thinking he is the character he represents. He must idealize his material, by eliminating what is trivial, transient, and accidental, and representing only the essential form of the thing he imitates. In such representation his own personality has no place. He discovers significant tones and gestures by long patient study of his own and others' reactions and emotions, getting what aid he can from inspiration. If he follows this objective method, the method of the scientist, his own character should not be injured even by the representation of evil persons. Reading and acting are alike in method, subject matter, media, and effect. But they differ in manner, since the actor is in the play while the reader merely shows us the play.

PLAN OF STUDY

67. You are to imitate some imaginary person as outlined by your author. First, note carefully every suggestion of character, emotion, and action furnished by the text. Note the person's present situation. Create as far as you can his past history.

68. Write out in detail a description of his character and disposition. Is he strong or weak, confident or timid, reserved or mercurial, friendly or cold, etc.? How will he stand, walk, talk, laugh? By what means can you represent these traits?

69. What is his present mood? Is he the kind of person who has strong feelings, and who shows them outwardly? Are his words meant to express his emotions or to conceal them? By what means in voice and gesture can you reveal these emotions? Review the vocabulary of moods in Chapter 3.

70. Study in real life and in dramatic art the behavior of similar persons. Try to discover what is typical of them, and in your impersonation eliminate all that is transient and accidental.

71. Enter deeply into the life and emotion of the character. Practice repeatedly, and in your practice watch carefully for any tone, inflection, or gesture that seems helpful or effective in forwarding your conception. Remember this and use it again in your public performance.

72. In reading avoid so identifying yourself with the character as to pretend that you are the character. On the other hand, do not permit any of your own habitual or accidental mannerisms to distract attention from the essential idea, character, mood, or action of the person represented, and do not introduce any trivial or irrelevant details of voice and gesture.

73. In deciding upon the appropriate degree of emotion and gesticulation for your impersonation, consider the occasion, the cultural level of your hearers, and the demands of good taste. Read again the warnings against elocutionary excesses at the end of Chapter 1.

CRITERIA

57. Did the impersonator suggest the character, emotion, and action of the person represented?

58. Did he suggest the setting, scene, or situation?

59. Did he maintain a proper distance from reality by avoiding a photographic copy of the character and presenting only what was typical or significant?

60. Did he enter deeply into the life and emotion of the character without completely identifying himself with it?

61. Did he avoid irrelevant but arresting details of expression, and obliterate his own personality so that only the essence of the poet's conception was revealed?

62. Did he avoid excesses of impersonation, employing enough detail to stimulate the hearers' imagination, but not enough to stifle it?

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Why should an interpreter or actor understand the rules of his art?
2. Should an interpreter or an actor be able to represent a cowherd better than a real cowherd?
3. Is interpretation an art?
4. What problems of interpretation does dramatic poetry add to those of lyric poetry? In what respects are the problems the same?
5. Why and how must art be distinguished from reality, particularly the art of the interpreter?
6. What place in art has the artist's individuality?
7. How does an artist "idealize" concrete fact?
8. What is the essential method of artistic creation? Just how does an interpreter employ it?
9. How does the art of reading differ from the art of acting?

SELECTIONS FOR DRILL

MY LAST DUCHESS

FERRARA

Robert Browning

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said 5
"Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I) 10
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps 15
Frà Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat:" such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough 20
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed: she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 'twas all one! My favour at her breast, 25
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace—all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech, 30
Or blush, at least. She thanked men,—good! but thanked
Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame

This sort of trifling? Even had you skill 35
 In speech—(which I have not)—to make your will
 Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this
 Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
 Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let
 Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set 40
 Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
 —E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
 Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt,
 Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
 Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands; 45
 Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
 As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet
 The company below, then. I repeat,
 The Count your master's known munificence
 Is ample warrant that no just pretence 50
 Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
 Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
 At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
 Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
 Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity, 55
 Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

SUGGESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS: This poem is a favorite of oral readers though few take the trouble to find out what it is all about. The chief difficulty is understanding the character of the Duke who does the speaking. The average modern schoolgirl who reads the poem has so little in common with his character that she makes of him a ludicrous caricature. Your first and most important task in preparing the poem is to analyze his character. What manner of man is he?

Note the sub-title *Ferrara*. Look it up in a good encyclopedia and read the complete story of that romantic city. Browning's first title for the poem was *Italy*. The place, then, is clear enough, but what about the time? When did this happen? There are no definite clues, but Ferrara was a dukedom only between 1470 and 1597, and other indications in the poem help to place the incident in the period of the Italian Renaissance. Unless you are familiar with that great period in our civilization you are not likely to understand the Duke or his attitude toward his last Duchess. He was a man of the Renaissance with all the deep love of art, the pride, and the cruelty of the men of that period. You might begin your study by reading Julia Cartwright's *Beatrice d'Este*, a charming biography of the daughter of a Duke of Ferrara.

The situation in the poem is clear enough if you read it attentively. The Duke is showing a portrait of his last Duchess to an emissary who has come

to arrange the details of his next marriage. Why does he show the portrait? Because he admires it as a work of art, or because showing it affords him an opportunity to make sure that his next wife will be properly instructed in her duties? Don't assume that he had to excuse his conduct toward his last wife. His name and position are secure. If he would not stoop to correct his wife's behavior why would he stoop to defend himself to a mere messenger? The language used is deceiving. "Will't please you" and "Oh sir," etc., suggest to us deference, and even pleading, when he is merely polite. Some of his courteous questions are really commands, and should be read as such. His statement about the dowry is a polite way of saying, "Your master will pay whatever I ask." His willingness to "go together down" to the company below is gracious condescension, as the messenger well knows. Perhaps he has more "skill in speech" than he pretends.

What does he mean by "I gave commands; then all smiles stopped together."? Our notions of romantic love, derived from Hollywood and current fiction, are outraged by his cold brutal treatment of his wife. But you must try to see the situation from his point of view. His pride in his name and rank and position may seem offensive, but is it not well founded? What may such a man legitimately expect from his wife? You must consider the social customs of the times and his place in society. You might remember that recently England in effect deposed a king because the woman he wished to marry was not suited for the office of queen. You cannot understand the Duke's reactions merely by imagining your own in a comparable situation. Since the man and his feelings lie outside the range of your experience you must study the people and customs of the time in which he lived.

If you can grasp the character of the Duke you need not have much trouble with his mood. As he talks of his last Duchess is he moved by guilt, regret, admiration, annoyance, disgust, indignation, contempt, or something else? How is his avowal of interest in the "fair daughter's self," instead of her dowry, to be taken? Is the concluding reference to the bronze statue merely casual, or is it a device to change the subject and indicate that the bargain is closed?

You may read the poem several times before you discover that it is in rhymed couplets. The style is purely conversational and prosy, and so rhyme and meter can be ignored.

THE PATRIOT

AN OLD STORY

Robert Browning

It was roses, roses, all the way,
 With myrtle mixed in my path like mad;
 The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,
 The church-spires flamed, such flags they had,
 A year ago on this very day.

The air broke into a mist with bells,
 The old walls rocked with the crowd and cries.
 Had I said, "Good folk, mere noise repels—
 But give me your sun from yonder skies!"
 They had answered "And afterward, what else?" 10

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun
 To give it my loving friends to keep!
 Naught man could do, have I left undone:
 And you see my harvest, what I reap
 This very day, now a year is run. 15

There's nobody on the house-tops now—
 Just a palsied few at the windows set;
 For the best of the sight is, all allow,
 At the Shambles' Gate—or, better yet,
 By the very scaffold's foot, I trow. 20

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,
 A rope cuts both my wrists behind;
 And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,
 For they fling, whoever has a mind,
 Stones at me for my year's misdeeds. 25

Thus I entered, and thus I go!
 In triumphs, people have dropped down dead.
 "Paid by the world, what dost thou owe
 Me?"—God might question; now instead,
 'Tis God shall repay: I am safer so. 30

SUGGESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS: Who is speaking? Under what circumstances? To whom? In what mood?

What manner of man is he? Able, or a visionary; a strong man or a weakling; ambitious or unselfish; generous or close; a man of words, or of actions? Was he sincerely devoted to the public good? Browning calls him a patriot. What is the essence of patriotism? How can it be expressed in voice and bearing?

What is his present mood? Is he bitter, cynical, disillusioned, disappointed, resentful, defiant, confident, indifferent, courageous, resigned, puzzled, heroic, rebellious? Does his mood change during this monologue? With what feeling does he remember the joyous celebration a year ago? Is he physically weak, exhausted? How does he walk? With head up, or bowed? Or is he walking?

There were "roses all the way" where? Why the myrtle? What made the roofs heave and sway? What is the relation of the flaming spires to the flags? Was he the kind of inflated egotist who would frown on mere noise,

and ask for the sun? Who were his "loving friends"? Political hangers-on? Where are they now? Did he give the people just cause to turn against him? What were his "year's misdeeds"? Can you find in history, ancient or current, any parallel for this sudden reverse of popular opinion? What is about to happen? Is the last stanza the expression of a calm reasoned faith, or merely an anxious hope, or a vague rationalization? The meaning is troublesome. Presumably he is consoling himself with two reflections: "I might have died even in a triumph"; and "If I had been richly rewarded in life God would expect a richer return to him. It is better to be in a position to expect a reward from God."

To give an adequate picture of the scene and character it is not necessary to hold your hands as though they were tied behind you, but it would be best not to attempt to gesticulate with them. Neither will your forehead need grease-paint to represent blood-stains and rain-streaks, but you had best not wear too cheerful a brow.

SELECTIONS FOR PRACTICE

ULYSSES

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

It little profits that an idle king,
 By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
 Match'd with an agèd wife, I mete and dole
 Unequal laws unto a savage race,
 That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
 I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
 Life to the lees: all times I have enjoy'd
 Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
 That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
 Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
 Vext the dim sea; I am become a name;
 For always roaming with a hungry heart
 Much have I seen and known,—cities of men,
 And manners, climates, councils, governments,
 Myself not least, but honour'd of them all,—
 And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
 Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
 I am a part of all that I have met.
 Yet all experience is an arch where-thro'
 Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
 Forever and forever when I move.
 How dull it is to pause, to make an end,

To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!
 As tho' to breathe were life! Life piled on life
 Were all too little, and of one to me
 Little remains: but every hour is saved
 From that eternal silence, something more,
 A bringer of new things; and vile it were
 For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
 And this grey spirit yearning in desire
 To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
 Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
 To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—
 Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
 This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
 A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
 Subdue them to the useful and the good.
 Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
 Of common duties, decent not to fail
 In offices of tenderness, and pay
 Meet adoration to my household gods,
 When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail:
 There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
 Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with me—
 That ever with a frolic welcome took
 The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
 Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;
 Old age hath yet his honour and his toil;
 Death closes all: but something ere the end,
 Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
 Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
 The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
 The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
 Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
 'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
 Push off, and sitting well in order smite
 The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
 To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
 Of all the western stars, until I die.
 It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:
 It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
 And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.

Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are,
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

COME INTO THE GARDEN, MAUD

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown,
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone;
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the rose is blown.

For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
To faint in his light, and to die.

All night have the roses heard
The flute, violin, bassoon;
All night has the casement jassamine stirr'd
To the dancers dancing in tune;
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
And a hush with the setting moon.

I said to the lily, "There is but one,
With whom she has heart to be gay.
When will the dancers leave her alone?
She is weary of dance and play."
Now half to the setting moon are gone,
And half to the rising day;
Low on the sand and loud on the stone
The last wheel echoes away.

I said to the rose, "The brief night goes
In babble and revel and wine.

READING ALOUD

O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
For one that will never be thine?
But mine, but mine," so I sware to the rose,
"For ever and ever, mine."

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,
As the music clash'd in the Hall;
And long by the garden lake I stood,
For I heard your rivulet fall
From the lake to the meadow and on to the wood,
Our wood, that is dearer than all;

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet
That whenever a March-wind sighs
He set the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes,
To the woody hollows in which we meet
And the valleys of Paradise.

The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree;
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,
Knowing your promise to me;
The lilies and roses were all awake,
They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one;
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,
To the flowers and be their sun.

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear;
She is coming, my life, my fate.
The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near;"
And the white rose weeps, "She is late;"
The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear;"
And the lily whispers, "I wait."

She is coming, my own, my sweet;
 Were it ever so airy a tread,
 My heart would hear her and beat,
 Were it earth in an earthy bed;
 My dust would hear her and beat,
 Had I lain for a century dead,—
 Would start and tremble under her feet,
 And blossom in purple and red.

SATAN ENCOURAGES BEELZEBUB

From PARADISE LOST, I

John Milton

. . . Satan . . .

Breaking the horrid silence, thus began:—

"If thou beest he—but oh, how fall'n! how changed
 From him who, in the happy realms of light,
 Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
 Myriads, though bright!—if he whom mutual league,
 United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
 And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
 Joined with me once, now misery hath joined
 In equal ruin; into what pit thou seest
 From what height fallen: so much the stronger proved
 He with his thunder: and till then who knew
 The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,
 Nor what the potent Victor in his rage
 Can else inflict, do I repent, or change,
 Though changed in outward lustre; that fixed mind,
 And high disdain from sense of injured merit,
 That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,
 And to the fierce contention brought along
 Innumerable force of Spirits armed,
 That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,
 His utmost power with adverse power opposed
 In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,
 And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
 All is not lost—the unconquerable will,
 And study of revenge, immortal hate,
 And courage never to submit or yield:
 And what is else not to be overcome?

That glory never shall his wrath or might
 Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
 With suppliant knee, and deify his power
 Who, from the terror of this arm, so late
 Doubted his empire—that were low indeed;
 That were an ignominy and shame beneath
 This downfall; since by fate the strength of gods,
 And this empyreal substance, cannot fail;
 Since, through experience of this great event,
 In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,
 We may with more successful hope resolve
 To wage by force or guile eternal war,
 Irreconcilable to our grand Foe,
 Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy
 Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heaven."

So spake the apostate Angel, though in pain,
 Vaunting aloud, but racked with deep despair;
 And him thus answered soon his bold compeer:—

"O Prince! O Chief of many thronèd powers,
 That led the embattled Seraphim to war
 Under thy conduct, and, in dreadful deeds
 Fearless, endangered Heaven's perpetual King,
 And put to proof his high supremacy,
 Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate,
 Too well I see and rue the dire event
 That with sad overthrow and foul defeat
 Hath lost us Heaven, and all this mighty host
 In horrible destruction laid thus low,
 As far as gods and Heavenly essences
 Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains
 Invincible, and vigor soon returns,
 Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
 Here swallowed up in endless misery.
 But what if he our Conqueror (whom I now
 Of force believe almighty, since no less
 Than such could have o'erpowered such force as ours)
 Have left us this our spirit and strength entire,
 Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
 That we may so suffice his vengeful ire;
 Or do him mightier service, as his thralls
 By right of war, whate'er his business be,
 Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,

Or do his errands in the gloomy Deep?
What can it then avail, though yet we feel
Strength undiminished, or eternal being
To undergo eternal punishment?"

Whereto with speedy words the Arch-Fiend replied:—

"Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure—
To do aught good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil;
Which ofttimes may succeed so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destined aim.
But see the angry Victor hath recalled
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
Back to the gates of Heaven; the sulphurous hail,
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid
The fiery surge that from the precipice
Of Heaven received us falling; and the thunder,
Winged with red lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.
Let us not slip the occasion, whether scorn
Or satiate fury yield it from our Foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
The seat of desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
There rest, if any rest can harbour there;
And, reassembling our afflicted powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our Enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from hope,
If not, what resolution from despair."

SATAN'S AMBITION

*From PARADISE LOST, I**John Milton*

So stretched out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay,
 Chained on the burning lake; nor ever thence
 Had risen, or heaved his head, but that the will
 And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
 Left him at large to his own dark designs,
 That with reiterated crimes he might
 Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
 Evil to others, and enraged might see
 How all his malice served but to bring forth
 Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy, shown
 On Man by him seduced; but on himself
 Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance poured.

Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
 His mighty stature; on each hand the flames
 Driven backward slope their pointing spires, and, rolled
 In billows, leave in the midst a horrid vale.
 Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
 Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,
 That felt unusual weight; till on dry land
 He lights—if it were land that ever burned
 With solid, as the lake with liquid fire,
 And such appeared in hue, as when the force
 Of subterranean wind transports a hill
 Torn from Pelorus, or the shattered side
 Of thundering Ætna, whose combustible
 And fuelled entrails thence conceiving fire,
 Sublimed with mineral fury, aid the winds,
 And leave a singèd bottom all involved
 With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole
 Of unblest feet. Him followed his next mate,
 Both glorying to have 'scaped the Stygian flood
 As gods, and by their own recovered strength,
 Not by the sufferance of supernal power.

"Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"
 Said then the lost Archangel, "this the seat
 That we must change for Heaven! this mournful gloom
 For that celestial light? Be it so, since he
 Who now is sovran can dispose and bid

What shall be right: farthest from him is best,
 Whom reason hath equalled, force hath made supreme
 Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,
 Where joy forever dwells! Hail, horrors! hail,
 Infernal world! and thou, profoundest Hell,
 Receive thy new possessor: one who brings
 A mind not to be changed by place or time.
 The mind is its own place, and in itself
 Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
 What matter where, if I be still the same,
 And what I should be, all but less than he
 Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
 We shall be free; the Almighty hath not built
 Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:
 Here we may reign secure, and in my choice
 To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell:
 Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven.
 But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
 The associates and co-partners of our loss,
 Lie thus astonished on the oblivious pool,
 And call them not to share with us their part
 In this unhappy mansion, or once more
 With rallied arms to try what may be yet
 Regained in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell?"

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

John Keats

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
 Alone and palely loitering?
 The sedge has wither'd from the lake,
 And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
 So haggard and so woe-begone?
 The squirrel's granary is full,
 And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow
 With anguish moist and fever dew,
 And on thy cheeks a fading rose
 Fast withereth too.

READING ALOUD

"I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful—a faery's child;
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

"I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She look'd at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

"I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sideways would she lean, and sing
A faery's song.

"She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna-dew,
And sure in language strange she said—
'I love thee true.'

"She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sigh'd full sore,
And there I shut her wild, wild eyes,
With kisses four.

"And there she lullèd me asleep,
And there I dream'd—ah! woe betide!—
The latest dream I ever dream'd
On the cold hill's side.

"I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
They cried—'La Belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall!'

"I saw their starved lips in the gloam,
With horrid warning gapèd wide;
And I awoke, and found me here
On the cold hill's side.

"And this is why I sojourn here,
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing."

EVELYN HOPE

Robert Browning

Beautiful Evelyn Hope is dead!
Sit and watch by her side an hour.
That is her book-shelf, this her bed;
She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,
Beginning to die too, in the glass;
Little has yet been changed, I think:
The shutters are shut, no light may pass
Save two long rays through the hinge's chink.

Sixteen years old when she died!
Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name;
It was not her time to love; beside,
Her life had many a hope and aim,
Duties enough and little cares,
And now was quiet, now astir,
Till God's hand beckoned unawares,—
And the sweet white brow is all of her.

Is it too late then, Evelyn Hope?
What, your soul was pure and true,
The good stars met in your horoscope,
Made you of spirit, fire and dew—
And, just because I was thrice as old
And our paths in the world diverged so wide,
Each was naught to each, must I be told?
We were fellow mortals, naught beside?

No, indeed! for God above
Is great to grant, as mighty to make,
And creates the love to reward the love:
I claim you still, for my own love's sake!
Delayed it may be for more lives yet,
Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few:
Much is to learn, much to forget
Ere the time be come for taking you.

But the time will come,—at last it will,
When, Evelyn Hope, what meant (I shall say)
In the lower earth, in the years long still,
That body and soul so pure and gay?

Why your hair was amber, I shall divine,
 And your mouth of your own geranium's red—
 And what you would do with me, in fine,
 In the new life come in the old one's stead.

I have lived (I shall say) so much since then,
 Given up myself so many times,
 Gained me the gains of various men,
 Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes;
 Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full scope,
 Either I missed or itself missed me:
 And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope!
 What is the issue? let us see!

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while!
 My heart seemed full as it could hold;
 There was place and to spare for the frank young smile,
 And the red young mouth, and the hair's young gold.
 So, hush,—I will give you this leaf to keep:
 See, I shut it inside the sweet cold hand!
 There, that is our secret: go to sleep!
 You will wake, and remember, and understand.

HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM GHENT TO AIX

Robert Browning

I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris, and he;
 I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three;
 "Good speed!" cried the watch as the gate-bolts undrew,
 "Speed!" echoed the wall to us galloping through;
 Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,
 And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

Not a word to each other; we kept the great pace
 Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our place;
 I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,
 Then shortened each stirrup, and set the pique right,
 Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chained slacker the bit,
 Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

'Twas moonset at starting; but while we drew near
 Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned clear;
 At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see;

At Düffeld, 'twas morning as plain as could be;
And from Mecheln church-steeple we heard the half-chime,
So Joris broke silence with, "Yet there is time!"

At Aershot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,
And against him the cattle stood black every one,
To stare through the mist at us galloping past,
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,
With resolute shoulders, each butting away
The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray:

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent back
For my voice, and the other pricked out on his track;
And one eye's black intelligence,—ever that glance
O'er its white edge at me, his own master, askance!
And the thick heavy spume-flakes, which aye and anon
His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned; and cried Joris, "Stay spur!
Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her,
We'll remember at Aix"—for one heard the quick wheeze
Of her chest, saw the stretched neck and staggering knees,
And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,
As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

So, we were left galloping, Joris and I,
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky;
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble like chaff;
Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,
And "Gallop," gasped Joris, "for Aix is in sight!"

"How they'll greet us!"—and all in a moment his roan
Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as a stone;
And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight
Of the news which alone could save Aix from her fate,
With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buffcoat, each holster let fall,
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,
Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse without peer;
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise, bad or good,
Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.

And all I remember is—friends flocking round
 As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees on the ground;
 And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,
 As I poured down his throat our last measure of wine,
 Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
 Was no more than his due who brought good news from Ghent.

UP AT A VILLA—DOWN IN THE CITY

(As distinguished by an Italian person of quality)

Robert Browning

Had I but plenty of money, money enough and to spare,
 The house for me, no doubt, were a house in the city-square.
 Ah, such a life, such a life, as one leads at the window there!

Something to see, by Bacchus, something to hear, at least!
 There, the whole day long, one's life is a perfect feast;
 While up at a villa one lives, I maintain it, no more than a beast.

Well now, look at our villa! stuck like the horn of a bull
 Just on a mountain's edge as bare as the creature's skull,
 Save a mere shag of a bush with hardly a leaf to pull!
 —I scratch my own, sometimes, to see if the hair's turned wool.

But the city, oh the city—the square with the houses! Why?
 They are stone-faced, white as a curd, there's something to take
 the eye!

Houses in four straight lines, not a single front awry!
 You watch who crosses and gossips, who saunters, who hurries by:
 Green blinds, as a matter of course, to draw when the sun gets
 high;
 And the shops with fanciful signs which are painted properly.

What of a villa? Though winter be over in March by rights,
 'Tis May perhaps ere the snow shall have withered well off the
 heights:

You've the brown ploughed land before, where the oxen steam
 and wheeze,

And the hills over-smoked behind by the faint gray olive trees.

Is it better in May, I ask you? You've summer all at once;
 In a day he leaps complete with a few strong April suns.

'Mid the sharp short emerald wheat, scarce risen three fingers well,
The wild tulip, at end of its tube, blows out its great red bell
Like a thin clear bubble of blood, for the children to pick and sell.

Is it ever hot in the square? There's a fountain to spout and splash!
In the shade it sings and springs; in the shine such foam-bows flash
On the horses with curling fish-tails, that prance and paddle and
pash

Round the lady atop in her conch—fifty gazers do not abash,
Tho' all that she wears is some weeds round her waist in a sort of
sash.

All the year long at the villa, nothing to see though you linger,
Except yon cypress that points like death's lean lifted forefinger.
Some think fireflies pretty, when they mix i' the corn and mingle,
Or thrud the stinking hemp till the stalks of it seem a-tingle.
Late August or early September, the stunning cicala is shrill,
And the bees keep their tiresome whine round the resinous firs on
the hill.

Enough of the seasons,—I spare you the months of the fever and
chill.

Ere you open your eyes in the city, the blessed church-bells begin:
No sooner the bells leave off, than the diligence rattles in;
You get the pick of the news, and it costs you never a pin.
By and by there's the travelling doctor gives pills, lets blood, draws
teeth;

Or the Pulcinello-trumpet breaks up the market beneath.
At the post-office such a scene-picture—the new play piping hot!
And a notice how, only this morning, three liberal thieves were
shot.

Above it, behold the archbishop's most fatherly of rebukes,
And beneath, with his crown and his lion, some little new law of
the Duke's!

Or a sonnet with flowery marge, to the Reverend Don So-and-so
Who is Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarca, St. Jerome, and Cicero,
"And moreover," (the sonnet goes rhyming), "the skirts of St.
Paul has reached,

Having preached us those six Lent-lectures more unctuous than
ever he preached."

Noon strikes,—here sweeps the procession! our lady borne smiling
and smart

With a pink gauze gown all spangles, and seven swords stuck in
her heart!

Bang—whang—whang, goes the drum, *tootle-te-tootle* the fife;
No keeping one's haunches still: it's the greatest pleasure in life.

But bless you, it's dear—it's dear! fowls, wine, at double the rate.
They have clapped a new tax upon salt, and what oil pays passing
the gate

It's a horror to think of. And so, the villa for me, not the city!
Beggars can scarcely be choosers: but still—ah, the pity, the pity!
Look, two and two go the priests, then the monks with cowls
and sandals,

And the penitents dressed in white skirts, a-holding the yellow
candles.

One, he carries a flag up straight, and another a cross with handles,
And the Duke's guard brings up the rear, for the better prevention
of scandals.

Bang—whang—whang, goes the drum, *tootle-te-tootle* the fife.
Oh, a day in the city-square, there is no such pleasure in life!

THE BISHOP ORDERS HIS TOMB AT SAINT PRAXED'S CHURCH

ROME, 15—

Robert Browning

Vanity, saith the preacher, vanity!
Draw round my bed: is Anselm keeping back?
Nephews—sons mine . . . ah God, I know not! Well—
She, men would have to be your mother once,
Old Gandolf envied me, so fair she was!
What's done is done, and she is dead beside,
Dead long ago, and I am Bishop since,
And as she died so must we die ourselves,
And thence ye may perceive the world's a dream.
Life, how and what is it? As here I lie
In this state-chamber, dying by degrees,
Hours and long hours in the dead night, I ask
"Do I live, am I dead?" Peace, peace seems all.
Saint Praxed's ever was the church for peace;
And so, about this tomb of mine. I fought
With tooth and nail to save my niche, ye know:
—Old Gandolf cozened me, despite my care;
Shrewd was that snatch from out the corner South
He graced his carrion with, God curse the same!

Yet still my niche is not so cramped but thence
One sees the pulpit o' the epistle-side,
And somewhat of the choir, those silent seats,
And up into the aëry dome where live
The angels, and a sunbeam's sure to lurk:
And I shall fill my slab of basalt there,
And 'neath my tabernacle take my rest,
With those nine columns round me, two and two,
The odd one at my feet where Anselm stands:
Peach-blossom marble all, the rare, the ripe
As fresh-poured red wine of a mighty pulse.
—Old Gandolf with his paltry onion-stone,
Put me where I may look at him! True peach,
Rosy and flawless: how I earned the prize!
Draw close: that conflagration of my church
—What then? So much was saved if aught were missed!
My sons, ye would not be my death? Go dig
The white-grape vineyard where the oil-press stood,
Drop water gently till the surface sink,
And if ye find . . . Ah God, I know not, I! . . .
Bedded in store of rotten fig-leaves soft,
And corded up in a tight olive-frail,
Some lump, ah God, of *lapis lazuli*,
Big as a Jew's head cut off at the nape,
Blue as a vein o'er the Madonna's breast . . .
Sons, all have I bequeathed you, villas, all,
That brave Frascati villa with its bath,
So, let the blue lump poise between my knees,
Like God the Father's globe on both his hands
Ye worship in the Jesu Church so gay,
For Gandolf shall not choose but see and burst!
Swift as a weaver's shuttle fleet our years:
Man goeth to the grave, and where is he?
Did I say basalt for my slab, sons? Black—
'Twas ever antique-black I meant! How else
Shall ye contrast my frieze to come beneath?
The bas-relief in bronze ye promised me,
Those Pans and Nymphs ye wot of, and perchance
Some tripod, thyrsus, with a vase or so,
The Saviour at his sermon on the mount,
Saint Praxed in a glory, and one Pan
Ready to twitch the Nymph's last garment off,
And Moses with the tables . . . but I know

Ye mark me not! What do they whisper thee,
Child of my bowels, Anselm? Ah, ye hope
To revel down my villas while I gasp
Bricked o'er with beggar's mouldy travertine
Which Gandolf from his tomb-top chuckles at!
Nay, boys, ye love me—all of jasper, then!
'Tis jasper ye stand pledged to, lest I grieve
My bath must needs be left behind, alas!
One block, pure green as a pistachio-nut,
There's plenty jasper somewhere in the world—
And have I not Saint Praxed's ear to pray
Horses for ye, and brown Greek manuscripts,
And mistresses with great smooth marbly limbs?
—That's if ye carve my epitaph aright,
Choice Latin, picked phrase, Tully's every word,
No gaudy ware like Gandolf's second line—
Tully, my masters? Ulpian serves his need!
And then how I shall lie through centuries,
And hear the blessed mutter of the mass,
And see God made and eaten all day long,
And feel the steady candle-flame, and taste
Good strong, thick, stupefying incense-smoke!
For as I lie here, hours of the dead night,
Dying in state and by such slow degrees,
I fold my arms as if they clasped a crook,
And stretch my feet forth straight as stone can point.
And let the bedclothes, for a mortcloth, drop
Into great laps and folds of sculptor's-work:
And as yon tapers dwindle, and strange thoughts
Grow, with a certain humming in my ears,
About the life before I lived this life,
And this life, too, popes, cardinals and priests,
Saint Praxed at his sermon on the mount,
Your tall pale mother with her talking eyes,
And new-found agate urns as fresh as day,
And marble's language, Latin pure, discreet,
—Aha, ELUCESCEBAT quoth our friend?
No Tully, said I, Ulpian at the best!
Evil and brief hath been my pilgrimage.
All *lapis*, all, sons! Else I give the Pope
My villas! Will ye ever eat my heart?
Ever your eyes were as a lizard's quick,
They glitter like your mother's for my soul,

IMPERSONATION

Or ye would heighten my impoverished frieze,
Piece out its starved design, and fill my vase
With grapes, and add a visor and a Term,
And to the tripod ye would tie a lynx
That in his struggle throws the thyrsus down,
To comfort me on my entablature
Whereon I am to lie till I must ask
"Do I live, am I dead?" There, leave me, there!
For ye have stabbed me with ingratitude
To death—ye wish it—God, ye wish it! Stone—
Gritstone, a-crumble! Clammy squares which sweat
As if the corpse they keep were oozing through—
And no more *lapis* to delight the world!
Well, go! I bless ye. Fewer tapers there,
But in a row: and, going, turn your backs
—Ay, like departing altar-ministrants,
And leave me in my church, the church for peace,
That I may watch at leisure if he leers—
Old Gandolf—at me, from his onion-stone,
As still he envied me, so fair she was!

YOUTH AND ART

Robert Browning

It once might have been, once only:
We lodged in a street together,
You, a sparrow on the housetop lonely,
I, a lone she-bird of his feather.

Your trade was with sticks and clay,
You thumbed, thrust, patted, and polished,
Then laughed "They will see some day,
Smith made, and Gibson demolished."

My business was song, song, song;
I chirped, cheeped, trilled, and twittered,
"Kate Brown's on the boards ere long,
And Grisi's existence embittered!"

I earned no more by a warble
Than you by a sketch in plaster;
You wanted a piece of marble,
I needed a music-master.

READING ALOUD

We studied hard in our styles,
Chipped each at a crust like Hindoos,
For air, looked out on the tiles,
For fun, watched each other's windows.

You lounged, like a boy of the South,
Cap and blouse—nay, a bit of beard too;
Or you got it, rubbing your mouth
With fingers the clay adhered to.

And I—soon managed to find
Weak points in the flower-fence facing,
Was forced to put up a blind
And be safe in my corset-lacing.

No harm! It was not my fault
If you never turned your eye's tail up
As I shook upon E *in alt.*,
Or ran the chromatic scale up;

For spring bade the sparrows pair,
And the boys and girls gave guesses,
And stalls in our street looked rare
With bulrush and watercresses.

Why did not you pinch a flower
In a pellet of clay and fling it?
Why did not I put a power
Of thanks in a look, or sing it?

I did look, sharp as a lynx
(And yet the memory rankles)
When models arrived, some minx
Tripped up stairs, she and her ankles.

But I think I gave you as good!
"That foreign fellow—who can know
How she pays, in a playful mood,
For his tuning her that piano?"

Could you say so, and never say
"Suppose we join hands and fortunes,
And I fetch her from over the way,
Her, piano, and long tunes and short tunes?"

No, no; you would not be rash,
Nor I rasher and something over:
You've to settle yet Gibson's hash,
And Grisi yet lives in clover.

But you meet the Prince at the Board,
I'm queen myself at *bals-paré*,
I've married a rich old lord,
And you're dubbed knight and an R. A.

Each life's unfulfilled, you see;
It hangs still, patchy and scrappy:
We have not sighed deep, laughed free,
Starved, feasted, despaired,—been happy.

And nobody calls you a dunce,
And people suppose me clever;
This could but have happened once,
And we missed it, lost it forever.

A TALE

(*Epilogue to "The Two Poets of Croisic"*)

Robert Browning

What a pretty tale you told me
Once upon a time
—Said you found it somewhere (scold me!)
Was it prose or was it rhyme,
Greek or Latin? Greek, you said,
While your shoulder propped my head.

Anyhow there's no forgetting
This much if no more,
That a poet (pray, no petting!)
Yes, a bard, sir, famed of yore,
Went where suchlike used to go,
Singing for a prize, you know.

Well, he had to sing, nor merely
Sing but play the lyre;
Playing was important clearly
Quite as singing: I desire,
Sir, you keep the fact in mind
For a purpose that's behind.

There stood he, while deep attention
Held the judges round,
—Judges able, I should mention,
To detect the slightest sound
Sung or played amiss: such ears
Had old judges, it appears!

None the less he sang out boldly,
Played in time and tune,
Till the judges, weighing coldly
Each note's worth, seemed, late or soon,
Sure to smile "In vain one tries
Picking faults out: take the prize!"

When, a mischief! Were they seven
Strings the lyre possessed?
Oh, and afterwards eleven,
Thank you! Well, sir,—who had guessed
Such ill luck in store?—it happed
One of those same seven strings snapped.

All was lost, then! No! a cricket
(What "cicada"? Pooh!)
—Some mad thing that left its thicket
For mere love of music—flew
With its little heart on fire,
Lighted on the crippled lyre.

So that when (Ah joy!) our singer
For his truant string
Feels with disconcerted finger,
What does cricket else but fling
Fiery heart forth, sound the note
Wanted by the throbbing throat?

Ay and, ever to the ending,
Cricket chirps at need,
Executes the hand's intending,
Promptly, perfectly,—indeed
Saves the singer from defeat
With her chirrup low and sweet.

Till, at ending, all the judges
Cry with one assent
"Take the prize—a prize who grudges

Such a voice and instrument?
Why, we took your lyre for harp,
So it shrilled us forth F sharp!"

Did the conqueror spurn the creature,
Once its service done?
That's no such uncommon feature
In the case when Music's son
Finds his Lotte's power too spent
For aiding soul-development.

No! This other, on returning
Homeward, prize in hand,
Satisfied his bosom's yearning:
(Sir, I hope you understand!)
—Said "Some record there must be
Of this cricket's help to me!"

So, he made himself a statue:
Marble stood, life-size;
On the lyre, he pointed at you,
Perched his partner in the prize;
Never more apart you found
Her, he throned, from him, she crowned.

That's the tale: its application?
Somebody I know
Hopes one day for reputation
Thro' his poetry that's—Oh,
All so learned and so wise
And deserving of a prize!

If he gains one, will some ticket
When his statue's built,
Tell the gazer "'Twas a cricket
Helped my crippled lyre, whose lilt
Sweet and low, when strength usurped
Softness' place i' the scale, she chirped?

"For as victory was nighest,
While I sang and played,—
With my lyre at lowest, highest,
Right alike,—one string that made
'Love' sound soft was snapt in twain
Never to be heard again,—

"Had not a kind cricket fluttered,
 Perched upon the place
 Vacant left, and duly uttered
 'Love, Love, Love,' whene'er the bass
 Asked the treble to atone
 For its somewhat sombre drone."

But you don't know music! Wherefore
 Keep on casting pearls
 To a —poet? All I care for
 Is—to tell him that a girl's
 "Love" comes aptly in when gruff
 Grows his singing. (There, enough!)

SOLILOQUY OF THE SPANISH CLOISTER

Robert Browning

GR-R-R—there go, my heart's abhorrence!
 Water your damned flower-pots, do!
 If hate killed men, Brother Lawrence,
 God's blood, would not mine kill you!
 What? your myrtle-bush wants trimming?
 Oh, that rose has prior claims—
 Needs its leaden vase filled brimming?
 Hell dry you up with its flames!

At the meal we sit together:
Salve tibi! I must hear
 Wise talk of the kind of weather,
 Sort of season, time of year:
Not a plenteous cork-crop: scarcely
Dare we hope oak-galls, I doubt:
What's the Latin name for "parsley"?
 What's the Greek name for Swine's Snout?

Whew! We'll have our platter burnished,
 Laid with care on our own shelf!
 With a fire-new spoon we're furnished,
 And a goblet for ourself,
 Rinsed like something sacrificial
 Ere 't is fit to touch our chaps—
 Marked with L for our initial!
 (He-he! There his lily snaps!)

Saint, forsooth! While brown Dolores
 Squats outside the Convent bank
 With Sanchicha, telling stories,
 Steeping tresses in the tank,
 Blue-black, lustrous, thick like horsehairs,
 —Can't I see his dead eye glow,
 Bright as 't were a Barbary corsair's?
 (That is, if he'd let it show!)

When he finishes refection,
 Knife and fork he never lays
 Cross-wise, to my recollection,
 As do I, in Jesu's praise.
 I the Trinity illustrate,
 Drinking watered orange-pulp—
 In three sips the Arian frustrate;
 While he drains his at one gulp.

Oh, those melons? If he's able
 We're to have a feast: so nice!
 One goes to the Abbot's table,
 All of us get each a slice.
 How go on your flowers? None double?
 Not one fruit-sort can you spy?
 Strange!—And I, too, at such trouble
 Keep them close-nipped on the sly!

There's a great text in Galatians,
 Once you trip on it, entails
 Twenty-nine distinct damnations,
 One sure, if another fails:
 If I trip him just a-dying,
 Sure of heaven as sure can be,
 Spin him round and send him flying
 Off to hell, a Manichee?

Or, my scrofulous French novel
 On gray paper with blunt type!
 Simply glance at it, you grovel
 Hand and foot in Belial's gripe:
 If I double down its pages
 At the woeful sixteenth print,
 When he gathers his greengages,
 Ope a sieve and slip it in 't?

Or, there's Satan!—one might venture
 Pledge one's soul to him, yet leave
 Such a flaw in the indenture
 As he'd miss till, past retrieve,
 Blasted lay that rose-acacia
 We're so proud of! *Hy, Zy, Hine . . .*
 'St, there's Vespers! *Plena gratia,*
Ave, Virgo! Gr-r-r—you swine!

"GRANDMITHER, THINK NOT I FORGET" *

Willa Sibert Cather

Grandmither, think not I forget, when I come back to town,
 An' wander the old ways again, an' tread them up and down.
 I never smell the clover bloom, nor see the swallows pass,
 Wi'out I mind how good ye were unto a little lass;
 I never hear the winter rain a-pelting all night through
 Wi'out I think and mind me of how cold it falls on you.
 An' if I come not often to your bed beneath the thyme,
 Mayhap 'tis that I'd change wi' ye, and gie my bed for thine,
 Would like to sleep in thine.

I never hear the summer winds among the roses blow
 Wi'out I wonder why it was ye loved the lassie so.
 Ye gave me cakes and lollipops and pretty toys a score—
 I never thought I should come back and ask ye now for more.
 Grandmither, gie me your still white hands that lie upon your breast,
 For mine do beat the dark all night and never find me rest;
 They grope among the shadows an' they beat the cold black air,
 They go seekin' in the darkness, an' they never find him there,
 They never find him there.

Grandmither, gie me your sightless eyes, that I may never see
 His own a-burnin' full o' love that must not shine for me.
 Grandmither, gie me your peaceful lips, white as the kirkyard snow,
 For mine be tremblin' wi' the wish that he must never know.
 Grandmither, gie me your clay-stopped ears, that I may never hear
 My lad a-singin' in the night when I am sick wi' fear;
 A-singin' when the moonlight over a' the land is white—
 Ah, God! I'll up and go to him, a-singin' in the night,
 A-callin' in the night.

* From *April Twilights* (Boston: Richard G. Badger, 1903).

Grandmither, gie me your clay-cold heart, that has forgot to ache,
 For mine be fire wi'in my breast an' yet it cannot break.
 Wi' every beat it's callin' for things that must not be,—
 So can ye not let me creep in an' rest awhile by ye?
 A little lass afeard o' dark slept by ye years ago—
 An' she has found what night can hold 'twixt sunset an' the dawn:
 So when I plant the rose an' rue above your grave for ye,
 Ye'll know it's under rue an' rose that I would like to be,
 That I would like to be.

BALLAD OF THE GOODLY FERE *

Simon Zelotes speaketh it somewhile after the Crucifixion.

Ezra Pound

Ha' we lost the goodliest fere o' all
 For the priests and the gallows tree?
 Aye lover he was of brawny men,
 O' ships and the open sea.

When they came wi' a host to take Our Man
 His smile was good to see,
 "First let these go!" quo' our Goodly Fere,
 "Or I'll see ye damned," says he.

Aye he sent us out through the crossed high spears
 And the scorn of his laugh rang free,
 "Why took ye not me when I walked about
 Alone in the town?" says he.

Oh we drank his "Hale" in the good red wine
 When we last made company.
 No capon priest was the Goodly Fere,
 But a man o' men was he.

I ha' seen him drive a hundred men
 Wi' a bundle o' cords swung free,
 That they took the high and holy house
 For their pawn and treasury.

They'll no' get him a' in a book, I think,
 Though they write it cunningly;
 No mouse of the scrolls was the Goodly Fere
 But aye loved the open sea.

* From *Personae* (New York: Horace Liveright, Inc., 1926).

*painter-martyr
 volume
 symphony
 eroticism
 triumph
 destruction
 of me
 of his
 person
 martyr*

*the mystery
 of the
 resurrection
 of Christ*

If they think they ha' snared our Goodly Fere
They are fools to the last degree.
"I'll go to the feast," quo' our Goodly Fere,
"Though I go to the gallows tree."

"Ye ha' seen me heal the lame and blind,
And wake the dead," says he.
"Ye shall see one thing to master all:
'Tis how a brave man dies on the tree."

A son of God was the Goodly Fere
That bade us his brothers be.
I ha' seen him cow a thousand men.
I have seen him upon the tree.

He cried no cry when they drave the nails
And the blood gushed hot and free.
The hounds of the crimson sky gave tongue,
But never a cry cried he.

I ha' seen him cow a thousand men
On the hills o' Galilee.
They whined as he walked out calm between,
Wi' his eyes like the gray o' the sea.

Like the sea that brooks no voyaging,
With the winds unleashed and free,
Like the sea that he cowed at Genseret
Wi' tvey words spoke, suddenly.

A master of men was the Goodly Fere,
A mate of the wind and sea.
If they think they ha' slain our Goodly Fere
They are fools eternally.

I ha' seen him eat o' the honey-comb
Sin' they nailed him to the tree.

GENERAL WILLIAM BOOTH ENTERS INTO HEAVEN *

*To be sung to the tune of THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB
with indicated instruments.*

Vachel Lindsay

Booth led boldly with his big bass drum.

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

The saints smiled gravely, and they said, "He's come."

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Bass drums

Walking lepers followed, rank on rank,

Lurching bravos from the ditches dank,

Drabs from the alleyways and drug-fiends pale—

Minds still passion-ridden, soul-powers frail!

Vermin-eaten saints with mouldy breath

Unwashed legions with the ways of death—

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Every slum had sent its half-a-score

The round world over—Booth had groaned for more.

Every banner that the wide world flies

Bloomed with glory and transcendent dyes.

Big-voiced lasses made their banjos bang!

Banjos

Tranced, fanatical, they shrieked and sang,

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Hallelujah! It was queer to see

Bull-necked convicts with that land make free!

Loons with bazoos blowing blare, blare, blare—

On, on, upward through the golden air.

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Booth died blind, and still by faith he trod,

Eyes still dazzled by the ways of God.

Bass drums slower and

Booth led boldly and he looked the chief:

softer

Eagle countenance in sharp relief,

Beard a-flying, air of high command

Unabated in that holy land.

Jesus came from out the Court-House door,

Stretched his hands above the passing poor.

Booth saw not, but led his queer ones there

Flutes

Round and round the mighty Court-House square.

Yet in an instant all that blear review

* From *Collected Poems*. By permission of The Macmillan Co.

Marched on spotless, clad in raiment new.
The lame were straightened, withered limbs uncurled
And blind eyes opened on a new sweet world.

Drabs and vixens in a flash made whole!
Gone was the weasel-head, the snout, the jowl;
Sages and sibyls now, and athletes clean,
Rulers of empires, and of forests green!
The hosts were sandalled and the wings were fire—
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

*Bass drums louder and
faster*

But their noise played havoc with the angel-choir.
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

*Grand chorus tambou-
rines—all instruments
in full blast*

Oh, shout Salvation! It was good to see
Kings and princes by the Lamb set free.
The banjos rattled and the tambourines
Jing-jing-jingled in the hands of queens!

And when Booth halted by the curb for prayer
He saw his Master through the flag-filled air.
Christ came gently with a robe and crown
For Booth the soldier while the throng knelt down.
He saw King Jesus—they were face to face,
And he knelt a-weeping in that holy place.
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

*Reverently sung—no
instruments*

THE SONG OF THE UNSUCCESSFUL *

Richard Burton

We are the toilers from whom God barred
The gifts that are good to hold.
We meant full well and we tried full hard,
And our failures were manifold.

And we are the clan of those whose kin
Were a millstone dragging them down.
Yea, we had to sweat for our brother's sin,
And lose the victor's crown.

The seeming-able, who all but scored,
From their teeming tribe we come:
What was there wrong with us, O Lord,
That our lives were dark and dumb?

* By permission of Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co.

The men ten-talented, who still
Strangely missed of the goal,
Of them we are: it seems Thy will
To harrow some in soul.

We are the sinners, too, whose lust
Conquered the higher claims,
We sat us prone in the common dust,
And played at the devil's games.

We are the hard-luck folk, who strove
Zealously, but in vain;
We lost and lost, while our comrades throve,
And still we lost again.

We are the doubles of those whose way
Was festal with fruits and flowers;
Body and brain we were sound as they,
But the prizes were not ours.

A mighty army our full ranks make,
We shake the graves as we go;
The sudden stroke and the slow heartbreak,
They both have brought us low.

And while we are laying life's sword aside,
Spent and dishonored and sad,
Our epitaph this, when once we have died:
"The weak lie here, and the bad."

We wonder if this can be really the close,
Life's fever cooled by death's trance;
And we cry, though it seem to our dearest of foes,
"God, give us another chance!"

THE CHESTNUT CASTS HIS FLAMBEAUX *

A. E. Housman

The chestnut casts his flambeaux, and the flowers
Stream from the hawthorn on the wind away,
The doors clap to, the pane is blind with showers.
Pass me the can, lad; there's an end of May.

* From *Last Poems*, by permission of Henry Holt & Co.

READING ALOUD

There's one spoilt spring to scant our mortal lot,
One season ruined of our little store.
May will be fine next year as like as not:
Oh, aye, but then we shall be twenty-four.

We for a certainty are not the first
Have sat in taverns while the tempest hurled
Their hopeful plans to emptiness, and cursed
Whatever brute and blackguard made the world.

It is in truth iniquity on high
To cheat our sentenced souls of aught they crave,
And mar the merriment as you and I
Fare on our long fool's errand to the grave.

Iniquity it is; but pass the can.
My lad, no pair of kings our mothers bore;
Our only portion is the estate of man:
We want the moon, but we shall get no more.

If here today the cloud of thunder lours
Tomorrow it will hie on far behests;
The flesh will grieve on other bones than ours
Soon, and the soul will mourn in other breasts.

The troubles of our proud and angry dust
Are from eternity, and shall not fail.
Bear them we can, and if we can we must.
Shoulder the sky, my lad, and drink your ale.

AT THE END OF THE DAY *

Richard Hovey

There is no escape by the river,
There is no flight left by the fen;
We are compassed about by the shiver
Of the night of their marching men.
Give a cheer!
For our hearts shall not give way.
Here's to a dark to-morrow
And here's to a brave to-day!

* Used by permission of the publishers, Dodd, Mead & Co., Inc.

The tale of their hosts is countless,
 And the tale of ours a score;
 But the palm is naught to the dauntless,
 And the cause is more and more.
 Give a cheer!
 We may die, but not give way.
 Here's to a silent morrow,
 And here's to a stout to-day!

God has said: "Ye shall fail and perish;
 But the thrill ye have felt to-night
 I shall keep in my heart and cherish
 When the worlds have passed in night."
 Give a cheer!
 For the soul shall not give way.
 Here's to the greater to-morrow
 That is born of a great to-day!

Now shame on the craven truckler
 And the puling things that mope!
 We've a rapture for our buckler
 That outwears the wings of hope.
 Give a cheer!
 For our joy shall not give way.
 Here's in the teeth of to-morrow
 To the glory of to-day!

THE WILD RIDE *

Louise Imogen Guiney

*I hear in my heart, I hear in its ominous pulses,
 All day, on the road, the hoofs of invisible horses,
 All night, from their stalls, the importunate pawing and neighing.*

Let cowards and laggards fall back! But alert to the saddle
 Weatherworn and abreast, go men of our galloping legion,
 With a stirrup-cup each to the lily of women that loves him.

The trail is through dolor and dread, over crags and morasses;
 There are shapes by the way, there are things that appal or entice us;
 What odds? We are Knights of the Grail, we are vowed to the riding.

* By permission of Houghton Mifflin Co.

Thought's self is a vanishing wing, and joy is a cobweb,
And friendship a flower in the dust, and glory a sunbeam:
Not here is our prize, nor, alas! after these our pursuing.

A dipping of plumes, a tear, a shake of the bridle,
A passing salute to this world and her pitiful beauty;
We hurry with never a word in the track of our fathers.

*I hear in my heart, I hear in its ominous pulses,
All day, on the road, the hoofs of invisible horses,
All night, from their stalls, the importunate pawing and neighing.*

We spur to a land of no name, outracing the storm-wind;
We leap to the infinite dark like sparks from the anvil.
Thou ledest, O God! All's well with Thy troopers that follow.

THE HOLLOW MEN *

Mistah Kurtz—he dead.

A penny for the Old Guy

T. S. Eliot

i

We are the hollow men
We are the stuffed men
Leaning together
Headpiece filled with straw. Alas!
Our dried voices, when
We whisper together
Are quiet and meaningless
As wind in dry grass
Or rats' feet over broken glass
In our dry cellar

Shape without form, shade without colour,
Paralysed force, gesture without motion;

Those who have crossed
With direct eyes, to death's other Kingdom
Remember us—if at all—not as lost
Violent souls, but only
As the hollow men
The stuffed men.

* From *Collected Poems 1909–1935*, copyright, 1936, by Harcourt, Brace & Co., Inc.

ii

Eyes I dare not meet in dreams
In death's dream kingdom
These do not appear:
There, the eyes are
Sunlight on a broken column
There, is a tree swinging
And voices are
In the wind's singing
More distant and more solemn
Than a fading star.

Let me be no nearer
In death's dream kingdom
Let me also wear
Such deliberate disguises
Rat's coat, crowskin, crossed staves
In a field
Behaving as the wind behaves
No nearer—

Not that final meeting
In the twilight kingdom

iii

This is the dead land
This is cactus land
Here the stone images
Are raised, here they receive
The supplication of a dead man's hand
Under the twinkle of a fading star.

Is it like this
In death's other kingdom
Waking alone
At the hour when we are
Trembling with tenderness
Lips that would kiss
Form prayers to broken stone.

iv

The eyes are not here
There are no eyes here

READING ALOUD

In this valley of dying stars
 In this hollow valley
 This broken jaw of our lost kingdoms

In this last of meeting places
 We grope together
 And avoid speech
 Gathered on this beach of the tumid river

Sightless, unless
 The eyes reappear
 As the perpetual star
 Multifoliate rose
 Of death's twilight kingdom
 The hope only
 Of empty men.

v

*Here we go round the prickly pear
 Prickly pear prickly pear
 Here we go round the prickly pear
 At five o'clock in the morning.*

Between the idea
 And the reality
 Between the motion
 And the act
 Falls the Shadow

For Thine is the Kingdom

Between the conception
 And the creation
 Between the emotion
 And the response
 Falls the Shadow

Life is very long

Between the desire
 And the spasm
 Between the potency
 And the existence
 Between the essence
 And the descent
 Falls the Shadow

For Thine is the Kingdom

For Thine is
Life is
For Thine is the

*This is the way the world ends
This is the way the world ends
This is the way the world ends
Not with a bang but a whimper.*

BURYING GROUND BY THE TIES *

Archibald MacLeish

Ayee! Ai! This is heavy earth on our shoulders:
There were none of us born to be buried in this earth:
Niggers we were Portuguese Magyars Polacks:

We were born to another look of the sky certainly:
Now we lie here in the river pastures:
We lie in the mowings under the thick turf:

We hear the earth and the all-day rasp of the grasshoppers:
It was we laid the steel on this land from ocean to ocean:
It was we (if you know) put the U.P. through the passes

Bringing her down into Laramie full load
Eighteen mile on the granite anticlinal
Forty-three foot to the mile and the grade holding:

It was we did it: hunkies of our kind:
It was we dug the caved-in holes for the cold water:
It was we built the gully spurs and the freight sidings:

Who would do it but we and the Irishmen bossing us?
It was all foreign-born men there were in this country:
It was Scotsmen Englishmen Chinese Squareheads Austrians . . .

Ayee! but there's weight to the earth under it:
Nor for this did we come out—to be lying here
Nameless under the ties in the clay cuts:

* From *Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City*, by permission of Houghton Mifflin Co.

There's nothing good in the world but the rich will buy it:
Everything sticks to the grease of a gold note—
Even a continent—even a new sky!

Do not pity us much for the strange grass over us:
We laid the steel to the stone stock of these mountains:
The place of our graves is marked by the telegraph poles!

It was not to lie in the bottoms we came out
And the trains going over us here in the dry hollows . . .

LAW LIKE LOVE *

W. H. Auden

Law, say the gardeners, is the sun,
Law is the one
All gardeners obey
Tomorrow, yesterday, today.

Law is the wisdom of the old
The impotent grandfathers shrilly scold;
The grandchildren put out a treble tongue,
Law is the senses of the young.

Law, says the priest with a priestly look,
Expounding to an unpriestly people,
Law is the words in my priestly book,
Law is my pulpit and my steeple.

Law, says the judge as he looks down his nose,
Speaking clearly and most severely,
Law is as I've told you before,
Law is as you know I suppose,
Law is but let me explain it once more,
Law is The Law.

Yet law-abiding scholars write;
Law is neither wrong nor right,
Law is only crimes
Punished by places and by times,

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Law is the clothes men wear
Anytime, anywhere,
Law is Good-morning and Good-night.

Others say, Law is our Fate;
Others say, Law is our State;
Others say, others say
Law is no more,
Law is gone away.

And always the loud angry crowd
Very angry and very loud
Law is We,
And always the soft idiot softly Me.

If we, dear, know we know no more
Than they about the law,
If I no more than you
Know what we should and should not do
Except that all agree
Gladly or miserably
That the law is
And that all know this,
If therefore thinking it absurd
To identify Law with some other word,
Unlike so many men
I cannot say Law is again,
No more than they can we suppress
The universal wish to guess
Or slip out of our own position
Into an unconcerned condition.

Although I can at least confine
Your vanity and mine
To stating timidly
A timid similarity,
We shall boast anyway:
Like love I say.

Like love we don't know where or why
Like love we can't compel or fly
Like love we often weep
Like love we seldom keep.

STILL, CITIZEN SPARROW *

Richard Wilbur

Still, citizen sparrow, this vulture which you call
Unnatural, let him but lumber again to air
Over the rotten office, let him bear
The carrion ballast up, and at the tall

Tip of the sky lie cruising. Then you'll see
That no more beautiful bird is in heaven's height,
No wider more placid wings, no watchfuller flight;
He shoulders nature there, the frightfully free,

The naked-headed one. Pardon him, you
Who dart in the orchard aisles, for it is he
Devours death, mocks mutability,
Has heart to make an end, keeps nature new.

Thinking of Noah, childheart, try to forget
How for so many bedlam hours his saw
Soured the song of birds with its wheezy gnaw,
And the slam of his hammer all the day beset

The people's ears. Forget that he could bear
To see the towns like coral under the keel,
And the fields so dismal deep. Try rather to feel
How high and weary it was, on the waters where

He rocked his only world, and everyone's.
Forgive the hero, you who would have died
Gladly with all you knew; he rode that tide
To Ararat; all men are Noah's sons.

GENTLEMEN-RANKERS †

Rudyard Kipling

To the legion of the lost ones, to the cohort of the damned,
To my brethren in their sorrow overseas,
Sings a gentleman of England cleanly bred, machinely crammed,
And a trooper of the Empress, if you please.

* From *Ceremony and Other Poems*, copyright, 1950, by Richard Wilbur. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace & Co., Inc.

† From *Departmental Ditties and Ballads and Barrack-Room Ballads*, reprinted by permission of Mrs. George Bambridge and Doubleday & Co., Inc.

Yea, a trooper of the forces who has run his own six horses,
 And faith he went the pace and went it blind,
 And the world was more than kin while he held the ready tin,
 But to-day the Sergeant's something less than kind.
 We're poor little lambs who've lost our way,
 Baa! Baa! Baa!
 We're little black sheep who've gone astray,
 Baa—aa—aa!
 Gentlemen-rankers out on the spree,
 Damned from here to Eternity,
 God ha' mercy on such as we,
 Baa! Yah! Bah!

Oh, it's sweet to sweat through stables, sweet to empty kitchen slops,
 And it's sweet to hear the tales the troopers tell,
 To dance with blowzy housemaids at the regimental hops
 And thrash the cad who says you waltz too well.
 Yes, it makes you cock-a-hoop to be "Rider" to your troop,
 And branded with a blasted worsted spur,
 When you envy, O how keenly, one poor Tommy being cleanly
 Who blacks your boots and sometimes calls you "Sir."

If the home we never write to, and the oaths we never keep,
 And, all we know most distant and most dear,
 Across the snoring barrack-room return to break our sleep,
 Can you blame us if we soak ourselves in beer?
 When the drunken comrade mutters and the great guard-lantern gutters
 And the horror of our fall is written plain,
 Every secret, self-revealing on the aching whitewashed ceiling,
 Do you wonder that we drug ourselves from pain?

We have done with Hope and Honour, we are lost to Love and Truth,
 We are dropping down the ladder rung by rung,
 And the measure of our torment is the measure of our youth.
 God help us, for we knew the worst too young!
 Our shame is clean repentance for the crime that brought the sentence,
 Our pride it is to know no spur of pride,
 And the Curse of Reuben holds us till an alien turf enfolds us
 And we die, and none can tell Them where we died.
 We're poor little lambs who've lost our way,
 Baa! Baa! Baa!
 We're little black sheep who've gone astray,
 Baa—aa—aa!

Gentlemen-rankers out on the spree,
 Damned from here to Eternity,
 God ha' mercy on such as we,
 Baa! Yah! Bah!

STARLIGHT LIKE INTUITION PIERCED THE TWELVE *

Delmore Schwartz

Like intuition, starlight pierced the twelve,
 The brittle night sky sparkled like a tune
 Tapped and tinkled upon the xylophone:
 Empty and vain, a glittering dune, the moon
 Arose too big, and, in the mood which ruled,
 Looked like a useless beauty in a pit:
 And then one said, after he carefully spat:
 "No matter what we do, he looks at it!"

"I cannot see a child or find a girl
 Beyond his smile which glows like that spring moon."
 "—Nothing no more the same," the second said,
 "Though all may be forgiven, never quite healed
 The wound I bear as witness, standing by;
 No ceremony surely appropriate,
 Nor secret love, escape or sleep because
 No matter what I do, he looks at it—"

"Now," said the third, "no thing will be the same:
 I am as one who never shuts his eyes,
 The sea and sky no more are marvellous,
 And I no longer understand surprise!"
 "Now," said the fourth, "nothing will be enough,
 —I heard his word accomplishing all wit:
 No word can be unsaid, no deed withdrawn;
 No matter what is said, he measures it!"

"Vision, imagination, hope, or dream
 Believed, denied, the scene we wished to see?
 It does not matter in the least: for what
 Is altered if it is not true? That we
 Saw goodness as it is—*this* is the awe

* By permission of the author.

And the abyss which we will not forget,
His story now the skull which holds all thought:
No matter what I think, I think of it!"

"And I will never be what once I was,"
Said one for long as single as a knife,
"And we will never be as once we were;
We have died once, this is a second life."
"My mind is spilled in moral chaos," one
Righteous as Job exclaimed, "now infinite
Suspicion of my heart rots what I will,
—No matter what I choose, he stares at it!"

"I am as one native in summer places,
—Ten weeks' excitement paid for by the rich;
Debauched by that, and then all winter bored,"
The sixth declared, "his peak left us a ditch."
"He came to make this life more difficult,"
The seventh said, "No one will ever fit
His measures' heights, all is inadequate:
No matter what we have, what good is it?"

"He gave forgiveness to us: what a gift!"
The eighth chimed in. "But now we know *how much*
Must be forgiven. But if forgiven, what?
The crime which was will be, and the least touch
Revives the memory: what is forgiveness worth?"
The ninth spoke thus: "Who now will ever sit
At ease in Zion at the Easter feast?
No matter what the place he touches it!"

"And I will always stammer, since he spoke,"
One who had been most eloquent said, stammering.
"I looked too long at the sun: like too much light,
Too much of goodness is a boomerang,"
Laughed the eleventh of the troop. "I must
Try what he tried: I saw the infinite
Who walked the lake and raised the hopeless dead:
No matter what the feat, he has accomplished it!"

So spoke the twelfth; and then the twelve in chorus:
"Unspeakable unnatural goodness is
Risen and shines and never will ignore us;
He glows forever in all consciousness;

Forgiveness, love, and hope possess the pit
And bring our endless guilt, like shadow's bars:
No matter what we do, he stares at it!
What pity then deny? what debt defer?
We know he looks at us like all the stars,
And we shall never be what once we were,
This life will never be what once it was!"

Chapter 13

PROSE RHYTHM

ANYONE who reads the poems in the preceding chapters, comprising as they do many of the classics of English literature, must feel at times that they owe their chief charm not so much to the ideas expressed or to the play of imagination and emotion as to the sounds and harmonies in which these elements find expression. That is, they owe their charm not so much to content as to form.

The harmonies of prose. The form of poetry has sometimes been thought the chief element in its beauty, and the distinguishing characteristic which separates it from prose. But acquaintance with the history of English prose makes it evident that prose has harmonies as glorious as those of verse and, many feel, a good deal finer, because more various and more subtle. Indeed their very subtlety as compared with the rhythms of verse has been a fruitful source of controversy, and a less fruitful source of research. Prose harmonies have been analyzed by scholars, critics, and literati, and even by psychologists and physicists, in an attempt to ferret out their mystery, and trace their development.

Highly ornamented prose (Amy Lowell called it "polyphonic"—many sounding) is supposed to have been originated by the Greek rhetorician Isocrates, and to have been further developed by the Roman orator Cicero, whose style was taken as a model by the Latin writers of the Middle Ages, and remained for ten centuries the dominant influence on the style of civilized Europe. Indelibly stamped upon the literature of the Roman Church, it passed into modern English by means of the King James Bible and the Book of

Common Prayer, and thence has affected all our great prose writers from Milton and Taylor and Browne down to the present.

Let us not assume that harmonious, or "polyphonic," prose is necessarily the best prose. Like poetry (or automobiles, or houses, or apples) prose is best when it best fulfills its function, and it is not always the function of prose to be beautiful. Often it has hard work to do—it is the medium of logic, of reasoned argument, of criticism and analysis, or of irony, satire, humor, and fantasy. It may achieve distinction in any of these manners. The kind of writing we are concerned with at present is primarily "literary" prose, the kind which in all times and in all languages spoken by civilized people has been admired by literary critics, the kind which pleases the aesthetic sense of the well trained and judicious reader, and which like poetry, is beautiful in and of itself, almost regardless of what it may say. In our language, as I have already suggested, it has generally the sonorous harmonies of the English Bible and the Book of Common Prayer. Let us see if we can discover wherein its beauties lie, and so attune our ears to their appreciation.

Wherein lies the charm of beautiful prose? Let us take the passage from De Quincey whose charm for Professor Saintsbury not even fifty years of familiarity with its text could lessen, and which he considers a magazine of the secrets of prose rhythm.¹

And her eyes,/ if they were ē/ver sēn,/ would bē nei/ther
sweet/ nor sūble;/ nō mān/ could read/ their stōry;/
they would bē found/filled/ with pērishīng/ dēams,/
and with wrēcks/ of fōrgōtten/ delīrīum.

This is Professor Saintsbury's scansion, and it seems, as Quiller-Couch says,² to please no one but the author, and, we might add, to be intelligible to no one but the author. Of the beauty of the passage there can be no doubt. Let us put aside for the moment the question of scansion, and see if there are not other elements present which may help to account for its charm.

¹ George Saintsbury, *A History of English Prose Rhythm* (London: The Macmillan Co., 1922), p. 308.

² Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, *On the Art of Writing* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1916), p. 152.

Professor Saintsbury points out that there are beautiful letters and beautiful syllables, and that though the vocabulary is quite ordinary "the vowel music, assisted and qualified by the consonants and the word lengths, is unerring." He might have mentioned also the alliteration in "sweet nor subtle" and "found filled," and the abundance of liquid as compared with stopt consonants. In his analysis of other passages he refers to vowel music, contrast, balance, apt epithets, adaptation of sound to sense, etc. That these devices do serve to give distinction and harmony to language is readily apparent. Any device that may be included in what we call loosely "poetic diction," when employed, as such devices often are, in prose, seems to lift the writing into a higher realm approaching poetry. Note the following passages, all taken from oratory:

The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms.

Bending his face to catch the words that tremble on the stricken lips.

Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the republic . . . its arms and trophies streaming in their original lustre.

"Sublimity" is the term used by an ancient Greek writer³ to describe such an elevated style. For sublimity of style he found five principal sources: grandeur of thought, vigorous and spirited treatment of the passions, a certain artifice in the employment of figures, dignified expression, and majesty and elevation of structure. To Longinus (?) sublimity was a quality of both prose and poetry, and we also will recognize these, and the other devices mentioned above, as characteristic of poetry as well as of prose. Most of them we have examined in previous chapters. The question arises then as to the difference between poetry and this "polyphonic" or "sublime" prose, and this brings us again to the problem of rhythm.

The nature of prose rhythm. Most critics hold that prose has its own peculiar rhythm which, many feel, is distinct from the rhythm of poetry. Aristotle, for instance, said, "Metrical prose has an artificial air and distracts the attention. . . . Prose must therefore have rhythm but not meter, for then it will be poetry."⁴ Cicero

³ Sometimes supposed to have been Longinus.

⁴ Aristotle *Rhetoric* iii. 8.

thought it worthy of remark "that if a verse is formed by the composition of words in prose it is a fault."⁵ Quintilian said, "Prose will not stoop to be measured by taps of the finger. . . . We must avoid what is metrical. . . . Versification produces weariness and satiety." Robert Louis Stevenson said, "Each phrase of each sentence, like a bar of air or a recitative in music, should be so artfully compounded out of long and short, out of accented and unaccented, as to gratify the sensual ear. And of this the ear is the sole judge. It is impossible to lay down laws. Even in our accentual and rhythmic language no analysis can find the secret of the beauty of a verse; how much less, then, of those phrases, such as prose is built of, which obey no law but to be lawless and yet to please?"⁷ And Professor Saintsbury believes that "the great principle of foot arrangement in prose, and of Prose Rhythm, is *Variety*."⁸

Such opinion is entitled to the highest respect. It would be easy to conclude that harmonious prose is merely poetry without metre, but did not all these writers, and a host of others, insist that prose has rhythm. Most of them assume that the rhythm of prose, like that of poetry, lies in some combination of light and heavy syllables. Professor Saintsbury, for instance, groups syllables into twenty-nine varieties of feet, but his arrangement is purely arbitrary, and has no law but his own caprice, as the sample quoted above will indicate. Some writers have counted the number of accents per phrase, but this device seems to yield no helpful results. Others have abandoned the attempt to discover rhythm in the arrangement of heavy and light syllables, and have attempted to find it elsewhere. One discovers a more or less subconscious throbbing underneath the flow of syllables. Another feels in each sentence a rushing, surging, gliding movement which, starting at some minimum of force and rapidity, pitch, or suspense, rises to a climax in one or all of the particulars, and then falls away again.

The trouble with all of these explanations is that they seldom satisfy anyone but their inventors. If we are to find any pleasure

⁵ Cicero *De oratore* iii. 44.

⁶ Quintilian *Institutio oratoria* ix. 4. 55, 77, 143.

⁷ Robert Louis Stevenson, "On Some Technical Elements of Style in Literature," in Lane Cooper (ed.), *Theories of Style* (New York: The Macmillan Co. 1912), pp. 373-74.

⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 478.

prose rhythm which we can communicate to others we must have a more exact definition of it.

Some writers agree with Stevenson that prose phrases obey no law but to be lawless, and yet to please. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, for instance, says the rhythms of prose are so lax and various that he doubts if any explanation of them is possible. After reading Saintsbury's *History of Prose Rhythm* he still doubts. "What madman," he exclaims, "will say, 'Thus, or thus far shalt thou go' to a prose thus invented and thus with its free rhythms, after three hundred years working on the imagination of Englishmen? Or who shall determine its range, whether of thought or of music?"⁹

Several "madmen," however, have pointed out, if not how far it should go, at least how far it has gone in the direction of meter. An industrious German scholar¹⁰ took the pains to analyze the clause endings in Cicero's orations, 17,000 of them (in Latin, of course), and found that in ninety-two per cent of them there was a definite metrical pattern, probably more or less consciously present in the orator's mind. Another German scholar¹¹ found from a careful study of English prose that it frequently contained iambic and dactylic periods alternating with nonrhythmical periods. A British investigator¹² suggests that Cicero and Quintilian probably failed to understand the principles by which their own utterances were governed, and states that the essence of rhythm, both in prose and poetry, is regularity of beat. Another¹³ concludes that "a little investigation will prove that a great deal of prose is written in short stretches of meter."

But let us leave the investigators and critics and see what we can discover for ourselves. First, look at the following passages:

And hence no force, however great,
Can draw a cord, however fine,
Into a horizontal line
That shall be absolutely straight.

⁹ Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, *On the Art of Writing* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1916), p. 66.

¹⁰ T. Zielinski, *Das Clauselgesetz in Ciceros Reden* (Leipzig: 1904).

¹¹ P. Fijn Van Dratt, *Rhythm in English Prose* (Heidelberg: 1910).

¹² A. C. Clark, *Prose Rhythm in English* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1913).

¹³ D. S. MacColl, *Essays and Studies of the English Association*, V (1914).

Fondly do we hope,
 Fervently do we pray,
 That this mighty scourge of war
 May speedily pass away.

Then ensued a scene of woe
 The like of which no eye had seen,
 No heart conceived, and which no tongue
 Can adequately tell.

Not that we
 Who drink thereof shall not grow old. We would
 Not have it so. But there is an ever
 Rushing, ever growing stream of youth
 That in these halls comes upward to the light.
 It never ceases. Always
 Bright with youthful hope it flows away
 To gladden and enrich our commonwealth.

These "verses" will readily be classified as poetry, but not one of them was written as poetry, or even as verse. They are all taken from prose. The first, a true freak, occurred quite by accident in a work of science. The second you will recognize as coming from Lincoln's Second Inaugural. The other two are from public speeches, the one by Edmund Burke, the other by Abbot Lawrence Lowell.

These are extreme cases, but they demonstrate that verses do occur in prose. Perhaps they go even further and demonstrate that the formation of a verse in prose is obtrusive and unpleasing. We can agree with Aristotle that such metrical prose has an artificial air and distracts the attention. But we need not conclude therefore that meter is always objectionable in prose. We shall find it even in those passages that critics agree are the finest in our language. Let us look again at Saintsbury's prize passage:

And her eyes, if they were ever seen, would be neither sweet nor subtle; no man could read their story; they would be found filled with perishing dreams, and with wrecks of forgotten delirium.

Here, it is true, "there is not so much as a blank verse," but there is meter.

her eyes/ if they/ were ev/ er seen
 would pass as acceptable iambic tetrameter;

would be nei/ ther sweet/ nor sub/tle
would serve as the next line of the same stanza;
and with wrecks/ of forgot/ten delir/ium

contains three successive anapests. With scansion thus suggested, these rhythms are plainly evident—too plainly perhaps for full enjoyment of the beauty of the passage. But to one who has not had the patterns pointed out, may not their presence, dimly felt but not clearly apprehended, bring a teasing sense of haunting elusiveness? ¹⁴

Psychologists have discovered that our greatest pleasure in the perception of any rhythm comes just at the moment when we feel that a rhythm has been established and identified, and that any rhythm if long continued becomes tiresome, and even annoying. The best prose adapts itself to these principles. In the best prose metrical runs seldom continue long, but change from iambic to anapest, from anapest to trochee, or are broken by phrases without rhythm. Prose rhythm occurs in snatches. Not often will be found such continuous runs as the one from Burke quoted above. Much more typical of the best prose is the De Quincey passage just quoted.

Time-beat rhythm. But there is, I believe, another kind of rhythm generally present in beautiful prose, and perceptible by anyone with a sensitive ear. Leigh Hunt showed how Coleridge, in his "Christabel," broke the monotonous singsong of iambic tetrameter by "calling to mind the liberties allowed its old musical professors, the minstrels, and dividing it by time instead of by syllables—by the beat of four into which you might get as many syllables as you could, instead of allotting eight syllables to the poor line whatever it might have to say." ¹⁵ In this case "as many syllables as you could" means either two or three for each time-beat. That is, the feet of "Christabel" are iambs and anapests indiscriminately mixed, as in this typical passage:

She had dreams all yesternight
Of her own betrothed knight;
And she in the midnight wood will pray
For the weal of her lover that's far away.

¹⁴ Here, as in some other parts of this chapter, I am borrowing from my paper "The Rhythm of Oratorical Prose" in A. M. Drummond (ed.), *Studies in Rhetoric and Public Speaking* (New York: The Century Co., 1925).

¹⁵ A. S. Cook (ed.), *What Is Poetry?* (Boston: Ginn & Co., 1893), p. 58.

If, as is quite evident, this irregularity does not interfere with the rhythm, may we not go further and try occasionally crowding four syllables into a foot? Vachel Lindsay did it in "The Congo" and yet maintained the regularity of beat of a tom-tom:

Béat an empty bárrél with the hándle of a bróom,
Hárd as they were áble,
Bóom, boom, bóom,
With a sílk umbrélla and the hándle of a bróom.

May we carry this principle still further? In these lines from Robert Bridges' "London Snow":

In lárge white flákes fálling on the cíty brówn
Steálthily and perpétually séttlíng and lóosely lýng.

some of the feet have five syllables, and some have only one. That is, the number of light syllables between the heavy ones may be four, or none. In some of the lines of de la Mare's "The Listeners" there are as many as five light syllables between the surges of emphasis that make the rhythm of the line:

Fell échoing through the sháadowiness of the stíll hóuse.

Yet the rhythm is there, and plainly felt. It is there not because of any given number of syllables to the foot, but because the accents are at equal intervals of time apart. Verse rhythm is aided by line length and by rhyme. If we eliminate these, there remains a rhythm of "time-beats," of heavy syllables at equal intervals of time, separated by varying numbers of light syllables. Such rhythm is perceivable in high-sounding prose. Note, for instance, this passage from De Quincey's *English Mail Coach*:

From the silence and deep peace of this saintly summer night—from the pathetic blending of this sweet moonlight, dawnlight, dreamlight—from the manly tenderness of this flattering, whispering, murmuring love—suddenly as from the woods and fields—suddenly as from the chambers of the air opening in revelation—suddenly as from the ground yawning at her feet, leaped upon her, with the flashing of cataracts, Death the crowned phantom with all the equipage of his terrors, and the tiger roar of his voice.

Here there are snatches of meter, sometimes too marked, as:

moonlight, dawnlight, dreamlight.
flattering, whispering, murmuring love.
suddenly as from the woods and fields. (blank verse)

But can you not also feel in any expressive reading of the passage a recurrence of heavy time-beats at equal intervals, as I have marked them in these sections?

súddenly as from the chámbers of the áir ópening in revelátiön.
súddenly as from the gróund yáwning at her feét.
Deáth the croúned phañtom, with áll the équipage of his
térrors, and the tíger róar of his vóice.

Note that at times two heavy syllables come together. Sometimes these are felt as a kind of compound stress crowning a surge of emphasis, as in "crowned phantom," or in this line from "The Listeners":

Stoód thrónging the fáint móonbeams on the dárk stáir.

in the combination "stood throng-," and "faint moon-," and "dark stair." At other times two contiguous heavy syllables will be felt as separate accents or beats, perhaps with a pause between, as in "ground yawning" and "air opening." This device, says Mr. A. C. Clark, peculiar to English prose, is responsible for some of its sublimest effects.¹⁶

Time-beats need not necessarily be separated from each other by unaccented syllables even in fairly long successions. Remarkable effects are sometimes secured by a run of strong heavy syllables. In the opening sentence of the finale of Browne's *Urne Buriall*:

Nów sínce thése déad bónes have already outlasted the living
ones of Methuselah, etc.

Professor Saintsbury says that the first five words are "monosyllabic feet-thuds, as of earth dropping on the coffin-lid or the urn." A similar succession of monosyllables in Bertrand Russell's "A Free Man's Worship," a part of which is quoted at the end of this chapter:

The slów, súde dóom fálls pítiless and dárk.

¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 12.

suggests the overpowering inevitability of the onward march of fate.

Unanalyzable cadence patterns. These two kinds of rhythm certainly help to account for the pleasure derived from prose music. But let us not be too sure that we have definitely and completely trapped and ticketed the charm of harmonious prose. Rhythm is so interwoven with neatness of phrase, harmony of sound, and beauty of thought, that we cannot assume that it alone is responsible for the pleasure derived from a beautiful passage. In both poetry and prose there is often a blending of regularity and variety into a cadence pattern of syllables, which, like the successive strains of a Brahms symphony, seems indeed to obey no law, and yet cannot be changed without a distinct loss. In this passage from Keats's "La Belle Dame sans Merci":

The sedge has withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

none of us, I think, would find the second line so satisfying if it read, "And not a bird does sing." Nor in another stanza would we wish to change:

And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too.—

so that the last line would read, "Fast is withering too." Yet the lines I have supplied are, if anything, a little more regular than the original ones. It is hard to say why Keats's rhythm seems just right.

And the same is often true in prose. The "King James" translators of the Bible gave the world (in 1611) one of its finest monuments of English prose. Later scholars, in attempting to bring this translation into nearer conformity to the original Hebrew and Greek texts, have almost invariably destroyed its music. Note, for instance, what they did to the thirteenth chapter of I. Corinthians. I quote first the Authorized, or King James, version:

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

Now notice how these passages stand in the American Revised Version:

1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have no love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal.

8 Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away.

12 For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known.

The mess which the Revisers made of this passage, says Professor Saintsbury, is notorious. "Being utterly ignorant of English literature they altered 'glass' to 'mirror,' because, I suppose, they were clever enough to know that 'glass' was not used for mirrors in the Apostle's days, and not clever enough to have heard of Gascoigne's 'Steel Glass' in the days of the 'Authorized' translators themselves. By recurring to 'love' instead of 'charity' . . . they have at one blow cut the whole rhythm of the passage to pieces, and submitted ugly jolting thuds for undulating spring-work. Because they thought a cymbal did not 'tinkle' but did 'clang,' they spoilt the sound of a whole phrase, and very doubtfully improved its sense, by altering to 'clanging' (they had not even the sense to try 'clashing,' and I wonder why they did not use 'bang'). Because of the absurd objection to synonyms . . . they spoilt the euphony by making both the 'prophecies' and the 'knowledge' be 'done away.'"¹⁷

Why is "charity" a better word than "love" here? It is hard to say, but most of us feel that it is. The superiority may lie in the cadence pattern of the syllables, or in the sounds of the letters, or in the connotations of the word. Just so the charm of any passage of beautiful prose may lie chiefly in these characteristics, or it may depend chiefly upon its rhythm of meter or time-beat, or it may be due to poetic diction, figures of speech, grandeur of thought, strong

¹⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 152. One wonders what Saintsbury would think of the change to "I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal," and "Love never ends; as for prophecy, it will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away" in the revision of 1946.

emotion, variety of rhetorical pattern, proportion, balance, or to alliteration, assonance, and euphony. The reader who would communicate its beauty to others must study the passage carefully for all of these devices and give them full value. As in reading poetry he has the power to accentuate or diminish all of these effects. His responsibility in prose is even greater because the harmonies of prose are often more subtle than those of poetry, and so may more easily be abused or lost.

Summary. Prose as well as poetry has harmonies, but they are more subtle and elusive. They lie partly in beautiful sound combinations, poetic diction, rhetorical structure, and other adjuncts of poetry, but they lie also partly in rhythm. Many deny or object to the presence of meter in prose, but have no other satisfactory explanation of prose rhythm. There is no doubt that slight runs of meter are perceptible in fine prose. They give pleasure only if varied and never long continued. There is also a rhythm of heavy syllables at equal intervals in time with varying numbers of light syllables between. Contiguous heavy syllables often contribute remarkable effects. There is also sometimes a pleasure in unanalyzable cadence patterns. All these devices should be understood by anyone who would communicate to others the harmonies of prose.

PLAN OF STUDY

(We are on very uncertain ground here, and only general directions can be given. All the instructions in previous chapters will be needed. Review especially the instructions in the chapters on Verse, Voice, and Pronunciation. After the thought is mastered do not neglect to read the selection aloud again and again with great deliberation, surrendering yourself to the sound and the swing of the words.)

74. Take special pains to give proper value to every consonant and vowel sound. Note the contribution which each makes to the total harmony. Round out the strong vowels fully.

75. See that every syllable falls accurately into its appointed place in the phrase, and contributes its proper value to the tone harmony of the whole.

76. Look particularly for snatches of meter, and mark their scansion. So far as you can govern them in reading, aim to break off metric runs almost as soon as started, remembering that meter in prose can easily become obtrusive and offensive.

77. Mark the syllables that seem to constitute a time-beat rhythm. In reading beware of letting such rhythms continue too long unless the weak syllables between are highly varied in number.

78. Watch for compound stress, and for successions of heavy monosyllables.

79. Note both uniformity and variety in the patterns of phrases, and try to keep the two in proper balance.

CRITERIA

63. Was utterance deliberate and carefully designed, so that every vowel and consonant sound, and every syllable, filled its proper place in the symphony of the whole?

64. Was too much or too little made of occasional sections of verse?

65. Were time-beat rhythms appreciated and properly capitalized?

66. In rendering both forms of rhythm was the pattern broken as soon as formed, or even before, so as to avoid the regularity which "produces weariness and satiety"?

67. Were the balance, proportion, and variety of phrase-groups properly appreciated and justly rendered?

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What is supposed to have been the origin of English prose harmony?
2. Is harmonious prose better than plain prose?
3. What are some of the elements that may contribute to beautiful prose?
4. What characteristics of poetry, aside from rhythm, are found in prose?
5. Is prose rhythm different from poetic rhythm?
6. What is the evidence for and against the presence of meter in prose?
7. Under what circumstances is rhythm tiresome, and when is it pleasurable?
8. Define and illustrate time-beat rhythm.
9. To what other factors may the charm of beautiful prose be due?

SELECTION FOR DRILL

A FREE MAN'S WORSHIP

*From MYSTICISM AND LOGIC **

Bertrand Russell

Brief and powerless is Man's life; on him and all his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way; for man, condemned to-day to lose his dearest, to-morrow himself to pass through the gate of darkness, it remains only to cherish, ere yet the blow falls, the lofty thoughts that ennoble his little day; disdaining the coward terrors of the slave of Fate, to worship at the shrine that his own hands have built; undismayed by the empire of chance, to preserve a mind free from the wanton tyranny that rules his outward life; proudly defiant of the irresistible forces that tolerate, for a moment, his knowledge and his condemnation, to sustain alone, a weary but unyielding Atlas, the world that his own ideals have fashioned despite the trampling march of unconscious power.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS: This selection is remarkable not so much for gorgeous poetic imagery as for its balance and variety of phrase and "elevation of structure." Nevertheless it contains some splendid imagery. Note the figures of falling doom, rolling matter, of the gate of darkness, the slave of fate, the empire of chance, etc. You will find examples of alliteration and assonance also. The long second sentence is beautifully balanced and proportioned. You will need all your powers of attention and comprehension to hold its elements in place in your mind as you read. Note that the main clause is "it remains," and that it is followed by four infinitive clauses, beginning "to cherish," "to worship," "to preserve," and "to sustain," each with appropriate modifiers. Keep this framework of the sentence clearly in mind.

Note these short stretches of meter:

on hím and áll his ráce the slów
blínd to góod and évil,
réckless óf destrúction
for mán condénned to-dáy to lóse his déarest
the lófty thóughts that ennóble his líttle dáy
despíte the trámping márch of uncónscious pówer.

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You will find also some rather emphatic time-beat rhythms. The paragraph opens with a suggestion of a strong time-beat given by the two strong stresses on "brief" and "pow-." This hint is not carried out, the potential rhythm being frustrated by the division of stress on "Man's life." This interrupted rhythm is taken up again, however, in the next clause, where the heavy monosyllables "slow, sure doom falls pit-," like the slow descending chords of a Tschaikowsky symphony, give a powerful emotional heightening to the impression of inevitability and pitilessness expressed by the words. There is a slight conflict between the metrical pattern and the time-beat in the phrase "reckless of destruction." The metrical rhythm would give it three stresses, the time-beat calls for only two. Anyone familiar with reading poetry knows, however, that such superpositions are a means to variety and beauty. A slightly different time-beat rhythm is set up in the clauses "it remains only to cherish ere yet the blow falls." Here are three strong stresses followed by a rest, and then three more strong stresses at practically the same time intervals. There follows a splendid run of well marked time-beat rhythm:

proudly defiant of the irresistible forces that
tolerate, for a moment, his knowledge and his con-
demnation, to sustain alone, a weary but unyielding
Atlas, the world that his own ideals have fashioned.

The passage must be broken, of course, by rests, and by accelerations and retardations, but the strong pulsing beat should never be completely lost until it finally resolves itself into the metric run which closes the paragraph:

despite the trampling march of unconscious power.

Because of the profuse rhythm, it would be possible for this paragraph to seem monotonous and singsong; but the reader is helped to avoid monotony by the varied length of the rhythmical units, by the obvious demands for rests, by the apparent accelerations and retardations of certain phrases, and by frequent changes in the nature of the rhythm.

Note how the long drive of regularly stressed words in the time-beat passage just quoted heightens the suggestion of courage and firmness which the author is making.¹

SELECTIONS FOR PRACTICE

ECCLESIASTES, XII *

1 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

¹ For both the discovery and the analysis of this passage I am deeply indebted to Professor Hoyt H. Hudson.

* This and the following two selections are from the King James Version of the Bible.

2 While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be darkened; nor the clouds return after the rain:

3 In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened,

4 And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and the daughters of music shall be brought low:

5 Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the hopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail; because man goes to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:

6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

ISAIAH, LX

1 Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

2 For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

3 And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

4 Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side.

5 Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

18 Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.

19 The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.

20 Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

I. CORINTHIANS, XIII

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

THE VANITY OF AMBITION

From URNE BURIALL

Sir Thomas Browne

Now since these dead bones have already out-lived the living ones of *Methuselah*, and in a yard under ground, and thin walls of clay, out-worn all the strong and specious buildings above it; and quietly rested under the drums and trappings of three conquests; what Prince can promise such diuturnity unto his Reliques, or might not gladly say,

Sic ego componi versus in ossa velim.

Time which antiquates Antiquities, and hath an art to make dust of a things, hath yet spared these *minor* Monuments.

In vain we hope to be known by open and visible conservatorie when to be unknown was the means of their continuation and obscurity their protection: If they dyed by violent hands, and were thrust into their Urnes, these bones become considerable, and some old Philosophers would honour them, whose souls they conceived most pure, which were thus snatched from their bodies; and to retain a stranger propension unto them: whereas they weariedly left a languishing corps, and with faint desires of reunion. If they fell by long and aged decay, yet wrapt up in the bundle of time, they fall into indistinction, and make but one blot with Infants. If we begin to die when we live, and long life be but a prolongation of death; our life is a sad composition; We live with death, and die not in a moment. How many pulses made up the life of *Methuselah*, were work for *Archimedes*: Common Counters summe up the life of *Moses* his man. Our dayes become considerable like petty sums by minute accumulations; where numerous fractions make up but small round numbers; and our dayes of a span long make not one little finger.

SLEEP

From THE GARDEN OF CYRUS

Sir Thomas Browne

But the quincunx of heaven runs low, and 'tis time to close the fountains of knowledge. We are unwilling to spin out our awaking thoughts into the phantasms of sleep, which often continueth precogitation making cables of cobwebs, and wildernesses of handsome groves. Besides Hippocrates hath spoke so little, and the oneirocritical masters have let such frigid interpretations from plants, that there is little encouragement to dream of Paradise itself. Nor will the sweetest delight of garden afford much comfort in sleep; wherein the dulness of that sense shaken hands with delectable odours; and though in the bed of Cleopatra, can hardly with any delight raise up the ghost of a rose.

Night, which Pagan theology could make the daughter of Chaos affords no advantage to the description of order; although no lower than that mass can we derive its genealogy. All things began in order, so shall they end, and so shall they begin again; according to the ordainer of order and mystical mathematicks of the city of heaven.

Though Somnus in Homer be sent to rouse up Agamemnon, I find no such effects in these drowsy approaches of sleep. To keep our eyes open longer, were but to act our Antipodes. The huntsmen are up in

America, and they are already past their first sleep in Persia. But who can be drowsy at that hour which freed us from everlasting sleep? or have slumbering thoughts at that time, when sleep itself must end, and, as some conjecture, all shall awake again?

THE QUEEN OF FRANCE AND THE SPIRIT OF CHIVALRY

Edmund Burke

I hear, and I rejoice to hear, that the great lady, the other object of the triumph, has borne that day (one is interested that beings made for suffering should suffer well), and that she bears all the succeeding days—that she bears the imprisonment of her husband, and her own captivity, and the exile of her friends, and the insulting adulation of addresses, and the whole weight of her accumulated wrongs, with a serene patience, in a manner suited to her rank and race, and becoming the offspring of a sovereign distinguished for her piety and her courage; that, like her, she has lofty sentiments; that she feels with the dignity of a Roman matron; that in the last extremity she will save herself from the last disgrace; and that, if she must fall, she will fall by no ignoble hand.

It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the Queen of France, then the dauphiness, at Versailles; and surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision. I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just began to move in, glittering like the morning star, full of life, and splendor, and joy. Oh! what a revolution! and what a heart must I have, to contemplate, without emotion, that elevation and that fall! Little did I dream, when she added titles of veneration to those of enthusiastic, distant, respectful love, that she should ever be obliged to carry the sharp antidote against disgrace concealed in that bosom; little did I dream that I should have lived to see such disasters fallen upon her in a nation of gallant men, in a nation of men of honor and of cavaliers. I thought ten thousand swords must have leaped from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult. But the age of chivalry is gone; that of sophisters, economists, and calculators has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished forever. Never, never more shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart, which kept alive, even in servitude itself, the spirit of an exalted freedom. The unbought grace of life, the cheap defense of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise is gone! It is gone, that

sensibility of principle, that chastity of honor, which felt a stain like a wound, which inspired courage while it mitigated ferocity, which ennobled whatever it touched, and under which vice itself lost half its evil by losing all its grossness.

DREAM-FUGUE

(TUMULTUOSISSIMAMENTE)

From THE ENGLISH MAIL-COACH

Thomas De Quincey

Passion of sudden death! that once in youth I read and interpreted by the shadows of thy averted signs! rapture of panic taking the shape (which among tombs in churches I have seen) of woman bursting her sepulchral bonds—of woman's Ionic form bending forward from the ruins of her grave with arching foot, with eyes upraised, with clasped adoring hands—waiting, watching, trembling, praying for the trumpet's call to rise from dust forever! Ah, vision too fearful of shuddering humanity on the brink of almighty abysses!—vision that didst start back, that didst reel away, like a shrivelling scroll from before the wrath of fire racing on the wings of the wind! Epilepsy so brief of horror, wherefore is it that thou canst not die? Passing so suddenly into darkness, wherefore is it that still thou sheddest thy sad funeral blights upon the gorgeous mosaics of dreams? Fragment of music too passionate, heard once, and heard no more, what aileth thee, that thy deep rolling chords come up at intervals through all the worlds of sleep, and after forty years, have lost no element of horror?

DREAM-FUGUE, V

From THE ENGLISH MAIL-COACH

Thomas De Quincey

Then was completed the passion of the mighty fugue. The golden tubes of the organ, which as yet had but muttered at intervals—gleaming among clouds and surges of incense—threw up, as from fountains unfathomable, columns of heart-shattering music. Choir and anti-choir were filling fast with unknown voices. Thou also, Dying Trumpeter, with thy love that was victorious, didst enter the tumult; trumpet and echo—farewell love, and farewell anguish—rang through the dreadful *sanctus*. Oh, darkness of the grave! that from the crimson altar and from the fiery font wert visited and searched by the effulgence in the

angel's eye—were these indeed thy children? Pumps of life, that, from the burials of centuries, rose again to the voice of perfect joy, did ye indeed mingle with the festivals of death? Lo! as I looked back for seventy leagues through the mighty cathedral, I saw the quick and the dead that sang together to God, together that sang to the generations of man. All the hosts of jubilation, like armies that ride in pursuit, moved with one step. Us, that, with laureled heads, were passing from the cathedral, they overtook, and, as with a garment, they wrapped around with thunders greater than our own. As brothers we moved together; to the dawn that advanced, to the stars that fled; rendering thanks to God in the highest—that, having hid His face through one generation behind thick clouds of War, once again was ascending, from the Campo Santo of Waterloo was ascending, in the visions of Peace; rendering thanks for thee, young girl! whom having overshadowed with His ineffable passion of death, suddenly did God relent, suffered thy angel to turn aside His arm, and even in thee, sister unknown! shown to me for a moment only to be hidden for ever, found an occasion to glorify His goodness. A thousand times, amongst the phantoms of sleep, have I seen thee entering the gates of the golden dawn, with the secret word riding before thee, with the armies of the grave behind thee,—seen thee sinking, rising, raving, despairing; a thousand times in the worlds of sleep have I seen thee followed by God's angel through storms, through desert seas, through the darkness of quicksands, through dreams and the dreadful revelations that are in dreams; only that at the last, with one sling of His victorious arm, He might snatch thee back from ruin, and might emblazon in thy deliverance the endless resurrections of His love!

THE SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Abraham Lincoln

Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease when, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayer of both could not be answered. That of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. Woe unto the world because of offenses, for it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh. If we shall suppose

that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be repaid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, that the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.

THE FRONT OF ST. MARK'S

From THE STONES OF VENICE

John Ruskin

And well may they fall back, for beyond those troops of ordered arches there rises a vision out of the earth, and all the great square seems to have opened from it in a kind of awe, that we may see it far away;—a multitude of pillars and white domes, clustered into a long low pyramid of coloured light; a treasure-heap, it seems, partly of gold, and partly of opal and mother-of-pearl, hollowed beneath into five great vaulted porches, ceiled with fair mosaic, and beset with sculpture of alabaster, clear as amber, and delicate as ivory, sculpture fantastic and involved, of palm leaves and lilies, and grapes and pomegranates, and birds clinging and fluttering among the branches, all twined together into an endless network of buds and plumes; and, in the midst of it, the solemn forms of angels, sceptred, and robed to the feet, and leaning to each other across the gates, their figures indistinct among the gleaming of the golden ground through the leaves beside them, interrupted and dim, like the morning light as it faded back among the branches of Eden, when first its gates were angel-guarded long ago. And round the walls of the porches there are set pillars of variegated stones, jasper and porphyry, and deep-green serpentine spotted with flakes of snow, and

marbles, that half refuse and half yield to the sunshine, Cleopatra-like, "their bluest veins to kiss"—the shadow, as it steals back from them, revealing line after line of azure undulation, as a receding tide leaves the waved sand; their capitals rich with interwoven tracery, rooted knots of herbage, and drifting leaves of acanthus and vine, and mystical signs, all beginning and ending in the Cross; and above them, in the broad archivolts, a continuous chain of language and of life—angels, and the signs of heaven and the labours of men, each in its appointed season upon the earth; and above these another range of glittering pinnacles, mixed with white arches edged with scarlet flowers,—a confusion of delight, amidst which the breasts of the Greek horses are seen blazing in their breadth of golden strength, and the St. Mark's Lion, lifted on a blue field covered with stars, until at last, as if in ecstasy, the crests of the arches break into a marble foam, and toss themselves far into the blue sky in flashes and wreaths of sculptured spray, as if the breakers of the Lido shore had been frost-bound before they fell, and the sea-nymphs had inlaid them with coral and amethyst.

THE TAPESTRY OF NATURE

From MYTH AND MIRACLE

Robert G. Ingersoll

The rise and set of sun, the birth and death of day, the dawns of silver and the dusks of gold, the wonders of the rain and snow, the shroud of Winter and the many colored robe of Spring, the lonely moon with nightly loss or gain, the serpent lightning and the thunder's voice, the tempest's fury and the zephyr's sigh, the threat of storm and promise of the bow, cathedral clouds with dome and spire, earthquake and strange eclipse, frost and fire, the snow-crowned mountains with their tongues of flame, the fields of space sown thick with stars, the wandering comets hurrying past the fixed and sleepless sentinels of night, the marvels of the earth and air, the perfumed flower, the painted wing, the waveless pool that held within its magic breast the image of the startled face, the mimic echo that made a record in the viewless air, the pathless forests and the boundless seas, the ebb and flow of tides—the slow, deep breathing of some vague and monstrous life—the miracle of birth, the mystery of dream and death, and over all the silent and immeasurable dome. These were the warp and woof, and at the loom sat Love and Fancy, Hope and Fear, and wove the wondrous tapestries whereon we find pictures of gods and fairy lands and all the legends that were told when Nature rocked the cradle of the infant world.

THE POETRY OF ANCIENT MYTHS

*From MYTH AND MIRACLE**Robert G. Ingersoll*

In all these myths and legends of the past we find philosophies and dreams and efforts, stained with tears, of great and tender souls who tried to pierce the mysteries of life and death, to answer the questions of the whence and whither, and who vainly sought with bits of shattered glass to make a mirror that would in very truth reflect the face and form of Nature's perfect self. These myths were born of hopes and fears, of tears and smiles, and they were touched and colored by all there is of joy and grief between the rosy dawn of birth and death's sad night. They clothed even the stars with passion, and gave to gods the faults and frailties of the sons of men. In them the winds and waves were music, and all the springs, the mountains, woods and perfumed dells were haunted by a thousand fairy forms. They thrilled the veins of Spring with tremulous desire, made tawny Summer's billowy breast the throne and home of love, filled Autumn's arms with sun-kissed grapes and gathered sheaves, and pictured Winter as a weak old king, who felt, like Lear, upon his withered face, Cordelia's tears.

MISCELLANEOUS SELECTIONS

THE WOMEN AT THE ADONIS FESTIVAL

IDYLL XV (TRANSLATION BY J. M. EDMONDS)

Theocritus

[The scene of this mime is Alexandria, and the chief characters are two fellow-countrywomen of the author. Gorgo, paying a morning call, finds Praxinoa, with her two-year-old child, superintending the spinning of her maids, and asks her to come with her to the Festival of Adonis at the palace of Ptolemy II. Praxinoa makes some demur, but at last washes and dresses and sallies forth with her visitor and their two maids. After sundry encounters in the crowded streets, they enter the palace, and soon after the prima donna begins the Dirge—which is really a wedding-song containing a forecast of a dirge—with an address to the bride Aphrodite and a reference to the deification of the queen of Ptolemy I. The song describes the scene—the offerings displayed about the marriage-bed, the two canopies of greenery above it, the bedstead with its representation of the Rape of Ganymede, the coverlets which enwrap the effigies of Adonis and Aphrodite, the image of the holy bridegroom himself—and ends with an anticipation of the choral dirge to be sung on the morrow at the funeral of Adonis.]

Gorgo (with her maid Eutychis at the door, as the maid Eunoa opens it): Praxinoa at home?

Praxinoa (running forward): Dear Gorgo! at last! she is at home. I quite thought you'd forgotten me. *(to the maid)* Here, Eunoa, a chair for the lady, and a cushion in it.

Gorgo (refusing the cushion): No, thank you, really.

Praxinoa: Do sit down.

Gorgo (sitting): O what a silly I was to come! What with the crush and the horses, Praxinoa, I've scarcely got here alive. It's all big boots and people in uniform. And the street was never-ending, and you can't think how far your house is along it.

Praxinoa: That's my lunatic; came and took one at the end of the world, and more an animal's den, too, than a place for a human being to live in, just to prevent you and me being neighbours, out of sheer spite, the jealous old wretch! He's always the same.

Gorgo: My dear, pray don't call your good Dinon such names before Baby. See how he's staring at you. (*to the child*) It's all right, Zopy, my pet. It's not dad-dad she's talking about.

Praxinoa: Upon my word, the child understands.

Gorgo: Nice dad-dad.

Praxinoa: And yet that dad-dad of his the other day—the other day, now, I tell 'Daddy, get mother some soap and rouge from the shop,' and, would you believe it? back he came with a packet of salt, the great six feet of folly!

Gorgo: Mine's just the same. Diocleidas is a perfect spendthrift. Yesterday he gave seven shillings apiece for mere bits of dog's hair, mere pluckings of old handbags, five of them, all filth, all work to be done over again. But come, my dear, get your cloak and gown. I want you to come with me (*grandly*) to call on our high and mighty Prince Ptolemy to see the Adonis. I hear the Queen's getting up something quite splendid this year.

Praxinoa (*hesitating*): Fine folk, fine ways.

Gorgo: Yes; but sightseers make good gossips, you know, if you've been and other people haven't. It's time we were on the move.

Praxinoa (*still hesitating*): It's always holidays with people who've nothing to do. (*suddenly making up her mind*) Here, Eunoa, you scratch-face, take up the spinning and put it away with the rest. Cats always *will* lie soft. Come, bestir yourself. Quick, some water! (*to Gorgo*) Water's wanted first, and she brings the soap. (*to Eunoa*) Never mind; give it me. (*E. pours out the powdered soap*) Not all that, you wicked waste! Pour out the water. (*E. washes her mistress's hands and face*) Oh, you wretch! What do you mean by wetting my bodice like that? That's enough. (*to Gorgo*) I've got myself washed somehow, thank goodness. (*to Eunoa*) Now where's the key of the big cupboard? Bring it here. (*Takes out a Dorian pinner—a gown fastened with pins or brooches to the shoulders and reaching to the ground, with an overfold coming to the waist—and puts it on with Eunoa's aid over the inner garment with short sleeves which she wears indoors*)

Gorgo (*referring to the style of the overfold*): Praxinoa, that full gathering suits you really well. Do tell me what you gave for the material.

Praxinoa: Don't speak of it, Gorgo; it was more than eight golden sovereigns, and I can tell you I put my very soul into making it up.

Gorgo: Well, all I can say is, it's *most* successful.

Praxinoa: It's very good of you to say so. (*to Eunoa*) Come, put on my cloak and hat for me, and mind you do it properly. (*Eunoa puts her cloak about her head and shoulders and pins the straw sun-hat to it*). (*taking up the child*) No; I'm not going to take you, Baby. Horse-bogey bites little boys. (*the child cries*) You may cry as much as you like; I'm not going to have you lamed for life. (*to Gorgo, giving the child to the nurse*) Come along. Take Baby and amuse him, Phrygia, and call the dog indoors and lock the front-door.

(*in the street*) Heavens, what a crowd! How we're to get through this awful crush and how long it's going to take us, I can't imagine. Talk of an antheap! (*apostrophising*) I *must* say, you've done us many a good turn, my good Ptolemy, since your father went to heaven. We have no villains sneaking up to murder us in the streets nowadays in the good old Egyptian style. They don't play those awful games now—the thorough-paced rogues, every one of them the same, all queer!

Gorgo dearest! what *shall* we do? The Royal Horse! Don't run me down, my good man. That bay's rearing. Look, what temper! Stand back, Eunoa, you reckless girl! He'll be the death of that man. Thank goodness I left Baby at home!

Gorgo: It's all right, *Praxinoa*. We've got well behind them, you see. They're all where they ought to be, now.

Praxinoa (recovering): And fortunately I can say the same of my poor wits. Ever since I was a girl, two things have frightened me more than anything else, a horrid slimy snake and a horse. Let's go on. Here's ever such a crowd pouring after us.

Gorgo (to an old woman): Have you come from the palace, mother?

Old Woman: Yes, my dears.

Gorgo: Then we can get there all right, can we?

Old Woman: Trying took Troy, my pretty; don't they say where there's a will there's a way?

Gorgo: That old lady gave us some oracles, didn't she?

Praxinoa (mock-sententiously): My dear, women know everything. They know all about Zeus marrying Hera.

Gorgo: Do look, *Praxinoa*; what a crowd there is at the door!

Praxinoa: Marvellous. Give me your arm, *Gorgo*; and you take hold of *Eutychis'* arm, *Eunoa*; and you hold on tight, *Eutychis*, or you'll be separated. We'll all go in together. Mind you keep hold of me, *Eunoa*. Oh dear, oh dear, *Gorgo*! my summer cloak's torn right in two. (*to a*

stranger) For Heaven's sake, as you wish to be saved, mind my cloak, sir.

First Stranger: I really can't help what happens; but I'll do my best.

Praxinoa: The crowd's simply enormous; they're pushing like a drove of pigs.

First Stranger: Don't be alarmed, madam; we're all right.

Praxinoa: You deserve to be all right to the end of your days, my dear sir, for the care you've been taking of us. (*to Gorgo*) What a kind considerate man! Poor Eunoa's getting squeezed. (*to Eunoa*) Push, you coward, can't you? (*they pass in*)

That's all right. All inside, as the bridegroom said when he shut the door.

Gorgo (*referring, as they move forward towards the dais, to the draperies which hang between the pillars*): Praxinoa, do come here. Before you do anything else I insist upon your looking at the embroideries. How delicate they are! and in such good taste! They're really hardly human, are they?

Praxinoa: Huswife Athena! the weavers that made that material and the embroiderers who did that close detailed work are simply marvel. How realistically the things all stand and move about in it! they're living! It is wonderful what people can do. And then the Holy Boy; how perfectly beautiful he looks lying on his silver couch, with the down of manhood just showing on his cheeks,—(*religioso*) the thrice-beloved Adonis, beloved even down below!

Second Stranger: Oh dear, oh dear, ladies! do stop that eternal cooing. (*to the bystanders*) They'll weary me to death with their ah-ah-ah-ing.

Praxinoa: My word! where *does* that person come from? What business is it of yours if we do coo? Buy your slaves before you order them about, pray. You're giving your orders to Syracusans. If you *must* know, we're Corinthians by extraction, like Bellerophon himself. What we talk's Peloponnesian. I suppose Dorians may speak Doric, mayn't they? Persephone! let's have no more masters than the one we've got. I shall do just as I like. Pray don't waste your breath.

Gorgo: Be quiet, Praxinoa. She's just going to begin the song, that Argive person's daughter, you know, the "accomplished vocalist" that was chosen to sing the dirge *last* year. You may be sure *she'll* give us something good. Look, she's making her bow.

(THE DIRGE)

Lover of Golgi and Idaly and Eryx' steepy hold,
O Lady Aphrodite with the face that beams like gold,
Twelve months are sped and soft-footed Heav'n's pretty laggards, see,
Bring o'er the never-tarrying stream Adonis back to thee.
The Seasons, the Seasons, full slow they go and come,
But some sweet thing for all they bring, and so they are welcome home.
O Cypris, Dion's daughter, of thee anealed, 'tis said,
Our Queen that was born of woman is e'en immortal made;
And now, sweet Lady of many names, of many shrines Ladye,
Thy guerdon's giv'n; for the Queen's daughter, as Helen fair to see,
Thy lad doth dight with all delight upon this holyday;
For there's not a fruit the orchard bears but is here for his hand to take,
And cresses trim all kept for him in many a silver tray,
And Syrian balm in vials of gold; and O, there's every cake
That ever woman kneaded of bolted meal so fair
With blossoms blent of every scent or oil or honey rare—
Here's all outlaid in semblance made of every bird and beast.

Two testers green they have plight ye, with dainty dill well dressed,
Whereon, like puny nightingales that flit from bough to bough
Trying their waxing wings to spread, the Love-babes hovering go.
How fair the ebony and the gold, the ivory white how fair,
And eagles twain to Zeus on high bringing his cup-bearer!
Aye, and the coverlets spread for ye are softer spread than sleep—
Forsooth Miletus town may say, or the master of Samian sheep,
"The bridal bed for Adonis spread of my own making is;
Cypris hath this for her wrapping, Adonis that for his."

Of eighteen years or nineteen is turned the rose-limbed groom;
His pretty lip is smooth to sip, for it bears but flaxen bloom.
And now she's in her husband's arms, and so we'll say good-night;
But to-morrow we'll come wi' the dew, the dew, and take hands and
bear him away

Where plashing wave the shore doth lave, and there with locks undight
And bosoms bare all shining fair will raise this shrilling lay:—
"O sweet Adonis, none but thee of the children of Gods and men
'Twixt overworld and underworld doth pass and pass agen;
That cannot Agamemnon, nor the Lord o' the Woeful Spleen,
Nor the first of the twice-ten children that came of the Trojan queen,
Nor Patroclus brave, nor Pyrrhus bold that home from the war did win,
Nor none o' the kith o' the old Lapith nor of them of Deucalion's kin—
E'en Pelops line lacks fate so fine, and Pelasgian Argos' pride.

Adonis sweet, Adonis dear,
 Be gracious for another year;
 Thou'rt welcome to thine own away,
 And welcome we'll both cry to-day
 And next Adonis-tide."

Gorgo: O Praxino! what clever things we women are! I do envy her knowing all that, and still more having such a lovely voice. But I must be getting back. It's Diocleidas' dinner-time, and that man's all pepper; I wouldn't advise anyone to come near him even, when he's kept waiting for his food. Goodbye, Adonis darling; and I only trust you may find us all thriving when you come next year.

PASTORAL LOVE ¹

*From AS YOU LIKE IT **

William Shakespeare

Enter SILVIUS and PHEBE

Sil. Sweet Phebe, do not scorn me; do not, Phebe:
 Say that you love me not, but say not so
 In bitterness. The common executioner,
 Whose heart the accustom'd sight of death makes hard,
 Falls not the axe upon the humbled neck
 But first begs pardon: will you sterner be
 Than he that dies and lives by bloody drops?

Enter ROSALIND, CELIA, and CORIN, behind.

Phe. I would not be thy executioner:
 I fly thee, for I would not injure thee.
 Thou tell'st me there is murder in mine eye:
 'Tis pretty, sure, and very probable,
 That eyes that are the frail'st and softest things,
 Who shut their coward gates on atomies,
 Should be call'd tyrants, butchers, murderers!
 Now I do frown on thee with all my heart;
 And, if mine eyes can wound, now let them kill thee;
 Now counterfeit to swoond; why now fall down;
 Or, if thou canst not, O! for shame, for shame,
 Lie not, to say mine eyes are murderers.

¹ Before you attempt to read these scenes from Shakespeare be sure that you have made yourself thoroughly familiar with the plays from which they are taken.

* Act III, Scene 5.

Now show the wound mine eye hath made in thee:
Scratch thee but with a pin, and there remains
Some scar of it: lean but upon a rush,
The cicatrice and capable impressure
Thy palm some moment keeps; and now mine eyes,
Which I have darted at thee, hurt thee not.
Nor, I am sure, there is no force in eyes
That can do hurt.

Sil. O dear Phebe,
If ever,—as that ever may be near,—
You meet in some fresh cheek the power of fancy,
Then shall you know the wounds invisible
That love's keen arrows make.

Phe. But, till that time
Come not thou near me; and, when that time comes,
Afflict me with thy mocks, pity me not;
As, till that time I shall not pity thee.

Ros. (Advancing.) And why, I pray you?
Who might be your mother,
That you insult, exult, and all at once,
Over the wretched? What though you have no beauty,—
As by my faith, I see no more in you
Than without candle may go dark to bed.—
Must you be therefore proud and pitiless?
Why, what means this? Why do you look on me?
I see no more in you than in the ordinary
Of nature's sale-work. Od's my little life!
I think she means to tangle my eyes too.
No, faith, proud mistress, hope not after it:
'Tis not your inky brows, your black silk hair,
Your bugle eyeballs, nor your cheek of cream,
That can entame my spirits to your worship.
You foolish shepherd, wherefore do you follow her,
Like foggy south puffing with wind and rain?
You are a thousand times a properer man
Than she a woman: 'tis such fools as you
That make the world full of ill-favour'd children:
'Tis not her glass, but you, that flatters her;
And out of you she sees herself more proper
Than any of her lineaments can show her.
But, mistress, know yourself: down on your knees,
And thank heaven, fasting, for a good man's love:

For I must tell you friendly in your ear,
 Sell when you can; you are not for all markets.
 Cry the man mercy; love him; take his offer:
 Foul is most foul, being foul to be a scoffer.
 So take her to thee, shepherd. Fare you well.

Phe. Sweet youth, I pray you, chide a year together:
 I had rather hear you chide than this man woo.

Ros. He's fallen in love with her foulness, and she'll fall in love with my anger. If it be so, as fast as she answers thee with frowning looks, I'll sauce her with bitter words. Why look you so upon me?

Phe. For no ill will I bear you.

Ros. I pray you, do not fall in love with me,
 For I am falsier than vows made in wine:
 Besides, I like you not. If you will know my house,
 'Tis at the tuft of olives here hard by.
 Will you go, sister? Shepherd, ply her hard.
 Come, sister. Shepherdess, look on him better,
 And be not proud: though all the world could see,
 None could be so abus'd in sight as he.
 Come, to our flock.

(*Exeunt ROSALIND, CELIA, and CORIN*)

Phe. Dead shepherd, now I find thy saw of might:
 'Who ever lov'd that lov'd not at first sight?'

Sil. Sweet Phebe,—

Phe. Ha! what sayest thou, Silvius?

Sil. Sweet Phebe, pity me.

Phe. Why, I am sorry for thee, gentle Silvius.

Sil. Wherever sorrow is, relief would be:

If you do sorrow at my grief in love,
 By giving love your sorrow and my grief
 Were both extermin'd.

Phe. Thou hast my love: is not that neighbourly?

Sil. I would have you.

Phe. Why, that were covetousness.

Silvius, the time was that I hated thee;
 And yet it is not that I bear thee love;
 But since that thou canst talk of love so well,
 Thy company, which erst was irksome to me,
 I will endure, and I'll employ thee too;
 But do not look for further recompense
 Than thine own gladness that thou art employ'd.

Sil. So holy and so perfect is my love,
And I in such a poverty of grace,
That I shall think it a most plenteous crop
To glean the broken ears after the man
That the main harvest reaps: loose now and then
A scatter'd smile, and that I'll live upon.

Phe. Know'st thou the youth that spoke to me erewhile?

Sil. Not very well, but I have met him oft;
And he hath bought the cottage and the bounds
That the old carlot once was master of.

Phe. Think not I love him, though I ask for him.
'Tis but a peevish boy; yet he talks well;
But what care I for words? yet words do well,
When he that speaks them pleases those that hear.
It is a pretty youth: not very pretty:
But, sure, he's proud; and yet his pride becomes him:
He'll make a proper man: the best thing in him
Is his complexion; and faster than his tongue
Did make offence his eye did heal it up.
He is not very tall; yet for his years he's tall:
His leg is but so so; and yet 'tis well:
There was a pretty redness in his lip,
A little riper and more lusty red
Than that mix'd in his cheek; 'twas just the difference
Betwixt the constant red and mingled damask.
There be some women, *Silvius*, had they mark'd him
In parcels as I did, would have gone near
To fall in love with him; but, for my part,
I love him not nor hate him not; and yet
I have more cause to hate him than to love him:
For what had he to do to chide at me?
He said mine eyes were black and my hair black;
And, now I am remember'd, scorn'd at me.
I marvel why I answer'd not again:
But that's all one; omittance is no quittance.
I'll write to him a very taunting letter,
And thou shalt bear it: wilt thou, *Silvius*?

Sil. Phebe, with all my heart.

Phe. I'll write it straight;
The matter's in my head and in my heart:
I will be bitter with him and passing short.
Go with me, *Silvius*.

ROMEO AND JULIET

*From ROMEO AND JULIET ***William Shakespeare*

Romeo. He jests at scars, that never felt a wound.
But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou her maid art far more fair than she:
Be not her maid, since she is envious;
Her vestal livery is but sick and green,
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.
It is my lady; O! it is my love:
O! that she knew she were.
She speaks, yet she says nothing: what of that?
Her eye discourses; I will answer it.
I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars
As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright
That birds would sing and think it were not night.
See! how she leans her cheek upon her hand:
O! that I were a glove upon that hand:
That I might touch that cheek.

*Juliet.**Ay me!**Romeo.* She speaks.

O! speak again, bright angel; for thou art
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,
As is a winged messenger of heaven
Unto the white-upturned wond'ring eyes
Of mortals, that fall back to gaze on him
When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds,
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

Juliet. O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou Romeo?
Deny thy father, and refuse thy name;

* Act II, Scene 2.

Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

Romeo. Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

Juliet. 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;
Thou art thyself though, not a Montague.
What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O! be some other name:
What's in a name? that which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet;
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,
Retain that dear perfection which he owes
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name;
And for that name, which is no part of thee,
Take all myself.

Romeo. I take thee at thy word.
Call me but love, and I'll be new baptiz'd;
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

Juliet. What man art thou, that, thus bescreen'd in night,
So stumblest on my counsel?

Romeo. By a name
I know not how to tell thee who I am:
My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself,
Because it is an enemy to thee:
Had I it written, I would tear the word.

Juliet. My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words
Of that tongue's uttering, yet I know the sound:
Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?

Romeo. Neither, fair maid, if either thee dislike.

Juliet. How cam'st thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?
The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,
And the place death, considering who thou art,
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

Romeo. With love's light wings did I o'erperch these walls;
For stony limits cannot hold love out,
And what love can do that dares love attempt;
Therefore thy kinsmen are no stop to me.

Juliet. If they do see thee they will murder thee.

Romeo. Alack! there lies more peril in thine eye
Than twenty of their swords: look thou but sweet,
And I am proof against their enmity.

Juliet. I would not for the world they saw thee here.

Romeo. I have night's cloak to hide me from their eyes;
And but thou love me, let them find me here;
My life were better ended by their hate,
Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love.

Juliet. By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

Romeo. By Love, that first did prompt me to inquire;
He lent me counsel, and I lent him eyes.
I am no pilot; yet, wert thou as far
As that vast shore wash'd with the furthest sea,
I would adventure for such merchandise.

Juliet. Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek
For that which thou hast heard me speak tonight.
Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny
What I have spoke: but farewell compliment!
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say 'Ay';
And I will take thy word; yet, if thou swear'st,
Thou mayst prove false; at lovers' perjuries,
They say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo!
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay,
So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,
And therefore thou mayst think my 'haviour light:
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.
I should have been more strange, I must confess,
But that thou over-heard'st, ere I was 'ware,
My true love's passion: therefore pardon me,
And not impute this yielding to light love,
Which the dark night hath so discovered.

Romeo. Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops,—

Juliet. O! swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon,
That monthly changes in her circled orb,
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

Romeo. What shall I swear by?

Juliet. Do not swear at all;
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,
Which is the god of my idolatry,
And I'll believe thee.

Romeo. If my heart's dear love—

Juliet. Well, do not swear. Although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract to-night:
It is too rash, too unadvis'd, too sudden;
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
Ere one can say it lightens. Sweet, good-night!
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.
Good-night, good-night! as sweet repose and rest
Come to thy heart as that within my breast!

Romeo. O! wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

Juliet. What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?

Romeo. The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

Juliet. I gave thee mine before thou didst request it;
And yet I would it were to give again.

Romeo. Wouldst thou withdraw it? for what purpose, love?

Juliet. But to be frank, and give it thee again.
And yet I wish but for the thing I have:
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.
I hear some noise within; dear love, adieu!
Anon, good nurse! Sweet Montague, be true.

HOTSPUR'S REVOLT

From KING HENRY IV, PART I *

William Shakespeare

Northumberland. Yea, my good lord.
Those prisoners in your highness' name demanded,
Which Harry Percy here at Holmedon took,
Were, as he says, not with such strength denied
As is deliver'd to your majesty:
Either envy, therefore, or misprision
Is guilty of this fault and not my son.

Hotspur. My liege, I did deny no prisoners:
But I remember, when the fight was done,
When I was dry with rage and extreme toil,
Breathless and faint, leaning upon my sword,
Came there a certain lord, neat, and trimly dress'd,

* Act I, Scene 3.

Fresh as a bridegroom; and his chin, new reap'd,
 Show'd like a stubble-land at harvest-home:
 He was perfumed like a milliner,
 And 'twixt his finger and his thumb he held
 A pouncet-box, which ever and anon
 He gave his nose and took't away again;
 Who therewith angry, when it next came there,
 Took it in snuff: and still he smil'd and talk'd;
 And as the soldiers bore dead bodies by,
 He call'd them untaught knaves, unmannerly,
 To bring a slovenly unhandsome corpse
 Betwixt the wind and his nobility.
 With many holiday and lady terms
 He question'd me; among the rest, demanded
 My prisoners in your majesty's behalf.
 I then all smarting with my wounds being cold,
 To be so pester'd with a popinjay,
 Out of my grief and my impatience
 Answer'd neglectingly, I know not what,
 He should, or he should not; for't made me mad
 To see him shine so brisk and smell so sweet
 And talk so like a waiting-gentlewoman
 Of guns, and drums, and wounds,—God save the mark!—
 And telling me the sovereign'st thing on earth
 Was parmaceti for an inward bruise;
 And that it was great pity, so it was,
 This villainous saltpetre should be digg'd
 Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,
 Which many a good tall fellow had destroy'd
 So cowardly; and but for these vile guns,
 He would himself have been a soldier.
 This bald unjointed chat of his, my lord,
 I answer'd indirectly, as I said;
 And I beseech you, let not his report
 Come current for an accusation
 Betwixt my love and your high majesty.

Sir Walter Blunt. The circumstance consider'd, good my lord,
 Whatever Harry Percy then had said
 To such a person and in such a place,
 At such a time, with all the rest re-told,
 May reasonably die and never rise
 To do him wrong, or any way impeach

What then he said, so he unsay it now.

King Henry. Why, yet he doth deny his prisoners,
But with proviso and exception,
That we at our own charge shall ransom straight
His brother-in-law, the foolish Mortimer;
Who, on my soul, hath wilfully betray'd
The lives of those that he did lead to fight
Against the great magician, damn'd Glendower,
Whose daughter, as we hear, the Earl of March
Hath lately married. Shall our coffers then
Be emptied to redeem a traitor home?
Shall we buy treason, and indent with fears,
When they have lost and forfeited themselves?
No, on the barren mountains let him starve;
For I shall never hold that man my friend
Whose tongue shall ask me for one penny cost
To ransom home revolted Mortimer.

Hotspur. Revolted Mortimer!
He never did fall off, my sovereign liege,
But by the chance of war: to prove that true
Needs no more but one tongue for all those wounds,
Those mouthed wounds, which valiantly he took,
When on the gentle Severn's sedgy bank,
In single opposition, hand to hand,
He did confound the best part of an hour
In changing hardiment with great Glendower.
Three times they breath'd and three times did they drink,
Upon agreement, of swift Severn's flood,
Who then, affrighted with their bloody looks,
Ran fearfully among the trembling reeds
And hid his crisp head in the hollow bank
Blood-stained with these valiant combatants.
Never did base and rotten policy
Colour her working with such deadly wounds;
Nor never could the noble Mortimer
Receive so many, and all willingly:
Then let him not be slander'd with revolt.

King Henry. Thou dost belie him, Percy, thou dost belie him:
He never did encounter with Glendower:
I tell thee,
He durst as well have met the devil alone
As Owen Glendower for an enemy.

Art thou not asham'd? But, sirrah, henceforth
 Let me not hear you speak of Mortimer:
 Send me your prisoners with the speediest means,
 Or you shall hear in such a kind from me
 As will displease you. My Lord Northumberland,
 We license your departure with your son.
 Send us your prisoners, or you'll hear of it.

Exeunt KING HENRY, BLUNT, and train.

Hotspur. And if the devil come and roar for them,
 I will not send them: I will after straight
 And tell him so; for I will ease my heart,
 Albeit I make a hazard of my head.

Northumberland. What! drunk with choler? stay, and pause awhile:
 Here comes your uncle.

Re-enter WORCESTER.

Hotspur. Speak of Mortimer!
 'Zounds! I will speak of him; and let my soul
 Want mercy if I do not join with him:
 In his behalf I'll empty all these veins,
 And shed my dear blood drop by drop i' the dust,
 But I will lift the down-trod Mortimer
 As high i' the air as this unthankful king,
 As this ingrate and canker'd Bolingbroke.

Northumberland. Brother, the king hath made your nephew mad.

Worcester. Who struck this heat up after I was gone?

Hotspur. He will, forsooth, have all my prisoners;
 And when I urg'd the ransom once again
 Of my wife's brother, then his cheek look'd pale,
 And on my face he turn'd an eye of death,
 Trembling even at the name of Mortimer.

Worcester. I cannot blame him: was he not proclaim'd
 By Richard that is dead the next of blood?

Northumberland. He was; I heard the proclamation:
 And then it was when the unhappy king,—
 Whose wrongs in us God pardon!—did set forth
 Upon his Irish expedition;
 From whence he, intercepted, did return
 To be depos'd, and shortly murdered.

Worcester. And for whose death we in the world's wide mouth
 Live scandaliz'd and foully spoken of.

Hotspur. But, soft! I pray you, did King Richard then

Proclaim my brother Edmund Mortimer
Heir to the crown?

Northumberland. He did; myself did hear it.

Hotspur. Nay, then I cannot blame his cousin king,
That wish'd him on the barren mountains starve.
But shall it be that you, that set the crown
Upon the head of this forgetful man,
And for his sake wear the detested blot
Of murd'rous subornation, shall it be,
That you a world of curses undergo,
Being the agents, or base second means,
The cords, the ladder, or the hangman rather?
O! Pardon me that I descend so low,
To show the line and the predicament
Wherein you range under this subtle king.
Shall it for shame be spoken in these days,
Or fill up chronicles in time to come,
That men of your nobility and power,
Did gage them both in an unjust behalf,
As both of you—God pardon it!—have done,
To put down Richard, that sweet lovely rose,
And plant this thorn, this canker, Bolingbroke?
And shall it in more shame be further spoken,
That you are fool'd, discarded, and shook off
By him for whom these shames ye underwent?
No; yet time serves wherein you may redeem
Your banish'd honours, and restore yourselves
Into the good thoughts of the world again;
Revenge the jeering and disdain'd contempt
Of this proud king, who studies day and night
To answer all the debt he owes to you,
Therefore, I say,—

Worcester. Peace, cousin! say no more:
And now I will unclasp a secret book,
And to your quick-conceiving discontents
I'll read you matter deep and dangerous,
As full of peril and adventurous spirit
As to o'er-walk a current roaring loud,
On the unsteadfast footing of a spear.

Hotspur. If we fall in, good night! or sink or swim:
Send danger from the east unto the west,
So honour cross it from the north to south,

And let them grapple: O! the blood more stirs
To rouse a lion than to start a hare.

Northumberland. Imagination of some great exploit
Drives him beyond the bounds of patience.

Hotspur. By heaven methinks it were an easy leap
To pluck bright honour from the pale-fac'd moon,
Or dive into the bottom of the deep,
Where fathom-line could never touch the ground,
And pluck up drowned honour by the locks;
So he that doth redeem her thence might wear
Without corrival all her dignities:
But out upon this half-fac'd fellowship!

Worcester. He apprehends a world of figures here,
But not the form of what he should attend.
Good cousin, give me audience for a while.

Hotspur. I cry you mercy.

Worcester. Those same noble Scots
That are your prisoners,—

Hotspur. I'll keep them all;
By God, he shall not have a Scot of them:
No, if a Scot would save his soul, he shall not:
I'll keep them, by this hand.

Worcester. You start away,
And lend no ear unto my purposes.
Those prisoners you shall keep.

Hotspur. Nay, I will; that's flat:
He said he would not ransom Mortimer;
Forbade my tongue to speak of Mortimer;
But I will find him when he lies asleep,
And in his ear I'll holla 'Mortimer!'
Nay,
I'll have a starling shall be taught to speak
Nothing but 'Mortimer,' and give it him,
To keep his anger still in motion.

Worcester. Hear you, cousin; a word.

Hotspur. All studies here I solemnly defy,
Save how to gall and pinch this Bolingbroke:
And that same sword-and-buckler Prince of Wales,
But that I think his father loves him not,
And would be glad he met with some mischance,
I'd have him poison'd with a pot of ale.

Worcester. Farewell, kinsman: I will talk to you

When you are better temper'd to attend.

Northumberland. Why, what a wasp-stung and impatient fool
Art thou to break into this woman's mood,
Tying thine ear to no tongue but thine own!

Hotspur. Why, look you, I am whipp'd and scourg'd with rods,
Nettled and stung with pismires, when I hear
Of this vile politician, Bolingbroke.

In Richard's time,—what do ye call the place?—

A plague upon't—it is in Gloucestershire;—

'Twas where the madcap duke his uncle kept,

His uncle York; where I first bow'd my knee

Unto this king of smiles, this Bolingbroke,

'Sblood!

When you and he came back from Ravenspurgh.

Northumberland. At Berkeley Castle.

Hotspur. You say true.

Why, what a candy deal of courtesy

This fawning greyhound then did proffer me!

Look, 'when his infant fortune came to age,'

And 'gentle Harry Percy,' and 'kind cousin.'

O! the devil take such cozeners. God forgive me!

Good uncle, tell your tale, for I have done.

Worcester. Nay, if you have not, to't again;

We'll stay your leisure.

Hotspur. I have done, i' faith.

CARDINAL WOLSEY'S FALL

*From KING HENRY VIII **

William Shakespeare

Wolsey. Farewell! a long farewell, to all my greatness!

This is the state of man: to-day he puts forth

The tender leaves of hopes; to-morrow blossoms,

And bears his blushing honours thick upon him;

The third day comes a frost, a killing frost;

And, when he thinks, good easy man, full surely

His greatness is a-ripening, nips his root,

And then he falls, as I do. I have ventur'd,

Like little wanton boys that swim on bladders,

This many summers in a sea of glory,

* Act III, Scene 2.

But far beyond my depth: my high-blown pride
 At length broke under me, and now has left me,
 Weary and old with service, to the mercy
 Of a rude stream, that must for ever hide me.
 Vain pomp and glory of this world, I hate ye:
 I feel my heart new open'd. O! how wretched
 Is that poor man that hangs on princes' favours!
 There is, betwixt that smile we would aspire to,
 That sweet aspect of princes, and their ruin,
 More pangs and fears than wars or women have;
 And when he falls, he falls like Lucifer,
 Never to hope again.

Enter CROMWELL, amazedly.

Why, how now, Cromwell!

Cromwell. I have no power to speak, sir.

Wolsey. What! amaz'd

At my misfortunes? can thy spirit wonder
 A great man should decline? Nay, an you weep,
 I am fall'n indeed.

Cromwell. How does your Grace?

Wolsey. Why, well;

Never so truly happy, my good Cromwell.
 I know myself now; and I feel within me
 A peace above all earthly dignities,
 A still and quiet conscience. The king has cur'd me,
 I humbly thank his Grace; and from these shoulders
 These ruin'd pillars, out of pity taken
 A load would sink a navy, too much honour:
 O! 'tis a burden, Cromwell, 'tis a burden
 Too heavy for a man that hopes for heaven.

Cromwell. I am glad your Grace has made that right use of it.

Wolsey. I hope I have: I am able now, methinks,—
 Out of a fortitude of soul I feel,—
 To endure more miseries and greater far
 Than my weak-hearted enemies dare offer.

.

Go, get thee from me, Cromwell;
 I am a poor fall'n man, unworthy now
 To be thy lord and master: seek the king;—
 That sun, I pray, may never set!—I have told him

What, and how true thou art: he will advance thee;
Some little memory of me will stir him—
I know his noble nature—not to let
Thy hopeful service perish too. Good Cromwell,
Neglect him not; make use now, and provide
For thine own future safety.

Cromwell.

O my lord!

Must I then leave you? must I needs forego
So good, so noble, and so true a master?
Bear witness all that have not hearts of iron,
With what a sorrow Cromwell leaves his lord.
The king shall have my service; but my prayers
For ever and for ever, shall be yours.

Wolsey. Cromwell, I did not think to shed a tear
In all my miseries; but thou hast forc'd me,
Out of thy honest truth, to play the woman.
Let's dry our eyes: and thus far hear me, Cromwell;
And, when I am forgotten, as I shall be,
And sleep in dull cold marble, where no mention
Of me more must be heard of, say, I taught thee,
Say, Wolsey, that once trod the ways of glory,
And sounded all the depths and shoals of honour,
Found thee a way, out of his wrack, to rise in;
A sure and safe one, though thy master miss'd it.
Mark but my fall, and that that ruin'd me.
Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition:
By that sin fell the angels; how can man then,
The image of his Maker, hope to win by't?
Love thyself last: cherish those hearts that hate thee;
Corruption wins not more than honesty.
Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace,
To silence envious tongues: be just, and fear not.
Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,
Thy God's, and truth's; then if thou fall'st, O Cromwell!
Thou fall'st a blessed martyr. Serve the king;
And,—prithee, lead me in:
There take an inventory of all I have,
To the last penny; 'tis the king's: my robe,
And my integrity to heaven is all
I dare now call mine own. O Cromwell, Cromwell!
Had I but serv'd my God with half the zeal
I served my king, he would not in mine age

Have left me naked to mine enemies.

Cromwell. Good sir, have patience.

Wolsey. So I have. Farewell

The hopes of court! my hopes in heaven do dwell.

A CEMETERY AT HOGA POINT *

James A. Michener

I was flown down to Konora to recruit aviation replacements for LARU-8, which had been destroyed at Kuralei. As always, there were ten volunteers for each job up front. The skipper said, "Isn't LARU-8 the unit that waited almost a year for something to do?"

"Yes," I said. "Then it hurried to Kuralei just in time to catch a bomb in the belly."

"You're stealing my best men, but go ahead."

We flew the key men north. The rest of us waited for a transport. Tired and sweating, I leaned forward on the table. "Was Kuralei that tough?" the skipper asked.

"Not for me," I said. "Some of the fellows on the beaches, yes. But I did see a lot. You ever know Tony Fry?"

"Sure! He had that beer-bottle TBF didn't he? Used to see him in Guadal. He get it?"

"Yes," I said. I looked away. My right eye was twitching. I couldn't make it stop.

"Commander," the skipper said. "You're getting a case of nerves. What you need is a fishing party. I got some old togs. We'll go out and soak up some sun."

Konora was peaceful. As I gazed at it from the ammunition scow on which we fished, the island seemed asleep. Its low hills were beautiful against the deep sky. In the bend of the island there was a white slash across the green hill. "That's where Pearlstein ripped away the coral," I recalled. A gaunt steam shovel worked by the bay, lifting live coral for patching the airstrip. From time to time silvery bombers, white against the dark sky, settled down on the strip or rose from it in graceful circles.

Far out at sea slim birds of passage dived breathlessly at schools of fish. At the edge of the reef breakers shot silvery spume into the air. Along the horizon the ultramarine sky joined the gray-blue sea. I closed

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my eyes from this enchanting beauty. It was so remote from the torn coconut trees of Kuralei.

"It's not bad from out here," the skipper said.

It was difficult to believe that on Konora nine hundred and seventeen Japs were buried in graves patiently dug by Marines and SeaBees. Nor did it seem possible that two hundred and eighty-one Americans lay on that island in timeless sleep. Only a few weeks before this peaceful land had been torn and twisted like Kuralei.

Our ammunition barge now lay opposite Hoga Point. I said to the skipper, "Would you think me crazy if I asked you to put me ashore here? I can't seem to get things under control. I'd like to walk back to camp through the trees."

"You're the visitor," he said indulgently. He had the coxswain row me ashore. In a few minutes I was standing at the head of a small promontory which climbed slightly from the sea until it reached a height of sixty or seventy feet above the waves. At that level it formed a plateau which overlooked the vast Pacific on one side and the soft lagoon on the other. Here, on the ruins of their enemy, the Americans had built their cemetery.

A white picket fence surrounded the burial ground. From one corner rose a slim steel flagpole. From it fluttered an American flag. Because the air was so clean, the white stripes and the stars shone more beautifully than any I had ever seen before.

Before me lay the dead, the heroic dead who took the island. Upon a strange plateau, on a strange island, in a strange sea, far from their farms and villages, they slept forever beside the lagoon which bore them to their day of battle. Over them the sea birds dipped in endless homage. Above them the deep sky erected a cathedral. I cannot put into words the emotions that captured me as I looked upon the graves of my friends. Never once during the five weeks I helped to plan the operations that engulfed Konora, not once at Kuralei, did I believe that I would die. No more did any man who now lay still in death. The Marine in the prow of the ship, he might die. The SeaBee who made noises when he ate, he might topple from the crane. But not I!

Yet there before me lay almost three hundred Americans who thought as I had thought. They could not die. But there were the white crosses. I was appalled by the relentless manner in which one dead plus one dead plus one dead add up to three white crosses. If you sit at home and read that two hundred and eighty-one men die in taking an island, the number is only a symbol for the mind to classify. But when you stand at the white crosses, the two hundred and eighty-one dead become men: the sons, the husbands, and the lovers.

Lonely and bitter, I leaned against the picket fence. It was then that I noticed a tall, very thin Negro ambling toward me. He walked like one of the mechanical ducks which dull-eyed men sell on the street corners of New York, a waddle-walk obtained by never lifting either foot completely from the ground. But the Negro gave the shuffle a certain dignity. He looked as if he owned Hoga Point, as if he had lived there all his life.

"Aftanoon, suh," he drawled. He was dragging a rake which he pushed against the picket fence. Holding it with both hands before his chest, he leaned forward. "Yo'-all lookin' fo' sumbuddy, suh? Or you jes' lookin'?"

"I'm just looking," I replied. "May I come in?"

"You certainly kin, suh!" the tall Negro replied. He pointed to the gate in the white pickets. "Won't you please come in, suh? It's a real pleasure to have officers visit the cemetery. Me 'n' Denis, we doan' see much people up dis yere way. Please to come in!"

I followed him to the gate, he on the inside of the pickets, I on the outside. Graciously he opened the gate and then carefully closed it. "I finds sittin' under dem trees mos' beneficial," he said, indicating several tall trees whose shadows fell within the fence. He slowly showed me to a rude hassock, probably the stump of an old tree overgrown with moss. He was correct. The seat in the shadows was beneficial.

"Me 'n' Denis, we sits here right often when de sun get too hot. Sun in dese yere latitudes is pow'ful strong sometimes." He spoke with a calm drawl which matched his gait. Gripping the rake handle firmly, he let himself down upon the earth beside me.

"Who is Denis?" I inquired.

"Me 'n' Denis, we runs dis yere place," the Negro replied.

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"Well, me 'n' Denis we is de only people dat works yere," he drawled. "Seem lak nobody else want to work in a place lak dis yere." With a languid sweep of his hand he indicated the white crosses.

"Is Denis a colored man, too?" I asked.

"Yes," he answered. "Me 'n' Denis, we is bof' cullud. He f'um Geo'gia. I f'um Mississippi."

"Isn't it strange," I asked, "for colored men to like work in a cemetery?"

My guide laughed, gently and easily. "Yes! Yes! I knows jes' what yo'-all means," he said. "All dem jokes about ghos's and cullud men. But what yo'-all doan' see," he added quietly, "is dat dey ain' no ghos's up here!"

He waved his hand once more across the graves. I waited for him to speak again.

"Up here," he continued, "dey is only heroes. Me 'n' Denis has often remarked dat never again will we be surrounded only by heroes. I 'spect we likes our work better'n any other men on dis yere rock. Would you like to walk among de graves, suh?" he inquired. "We got some mighty in'erestin' graves in here." Slowly, by means of the rake handle, he pulled himself to his feet. He led me to a small corner of the cemetery.

"Dese yere is de men dat took de las' Jap charge," he said softly, like the verger of the cathedral at Antwerp. "Wiped out. Ever'one of dem." He dropped his voice still lower. "Some of dem we couldn't even find. Dat is, not all of dem. We jes' had to bury arms and legs and call 'em bodies." He raised his voice. "But here dey all lie. Sleepin'. It doan' make no difference to 'em now. Bodies or no bodies. Dey all heroes!"

"Over here," he said proudly, "we got de bes' man of 'em all. Dat grave wid de flowers. Me 'n' Denis, we planted dem flowers." I looked at the garlanded grave. The plots around it were vacant, and the flowers grew in rich profusion, right up to the austere white cross: "Commander Hoag."

"As you kin see," the caretaker said solemnly, "dis here de commander. Commander Hoag hisse'f. Finer man never lived this side o' heaven. Ever'body says that. You know de commander?"

I replied that I had. The Negro droned on. "He about de bes' man I met in all de Navy. He kind to ever'body. Always greet you wid a smile. Wasn't afraid of bawlin' you out, neither. I remembers 'specially one time he give me 'n' Denis a bad time. Mighty bad time he give us. Had to do wid de officers' mess. We was mighty mad, at de time. But we got over it. 'N' here he lies. Daid lak de res'. Tell me, suh? What we gonna do if men lak de commander is killed all de time? Where we gonna git good men lak him? You 'spect there's men lak him ready to take his job?"

I slipped into Sunday school maxims. "Isn't it pretty true," I asked, "that good men always show up when they're needed? You don't think the SeaBees will fall apart just because Commander Hoag died?"

"Da's mah point!" the Negro cried. "Da's jes' mah point! Already we got a new skipper. Sure. But he ain' a good man! Not at all he ain'." The tall Negro looked about him slowly. "Lemme show you jes' what I mean." He placed his rake among the flowers on Commander Hoag's grave and leaned upon it. We talked across the grave of the fallen leader. Whenever the caretaker mentioned Hoag he would release one hand from the rake and point languidly downward.

"'Bout two month ago we git an officer in de unit dat hated cullud folk. He give us a mighty bad time in de mess hall. One morning I tell him twice we doan' have no eggs. He git very mad. 'Won't have no — eight ball tellin' me what to do and what not to do!' He shouted. Later in de day Commander Hoag he hear about dis yere ruckus. He call us into his office. All us cullud boys. He stand up when we come in. 'Men,' he say, 'I'm mighty sorry to hear about what happen dis mornin'. Yo'-all know we doan' act lak dat in de 144th. You men got rights jes' lak ever'one else. I ain't gonna stand by and see 'em abused.'" The Negro pointed at the grave with his thumb. "He was a good man. Where we gonna git good men lak him?"

I repeated my former argument and the Negro disagreed violently. "No, suh!" he replied. "I cain' believe dat. Dey's only so many good men, and if you uses 'em up, where you gonna git de others? Take de 144th! When Commander Hoag died, who dey put in his place? De officer dat give us black boys all dat trouble. What he say de first day? 'Gonna be some changes here! Ain' gonna take no mo' nonsense f'um a lot of — niggers!' Da's why me 'n' Denis works up here. Ain' nobody to push us aroun'. Ain' nobody always tellin' us what to do. We is de boss!" He surveyed his lonely acres. "Up here ever'body is easy to get along wid. Doan' make no difference is you cullud or white. When yo' daid you fo'get all dat stuff." He lifted his rake from Commander Hoag's grave and ambled down the long lines.

"Dat one ova' dere," he said, pointing with his rake to a small white cross at the end of a row. "He git drunk. Run off'n de cliff one night and kill hisse'f. All his own fault. But now he daid. Back home I guess he a big hero. I kin jes' hear his folks sayin' kinda proud and heartbreakin' at de same time, 'Our boy, he died on Konora.' Da's one reason why I likes to work here. Up here dey all heroes. Ain' a mean man in de bunch." We walked among the fresh graves. Already their brutal outlines were softened by wisps of tender grass. Along the fence yellow flowers were in bloom.

"Dis boy over here what I mean," the caretaker continued, pointing with his rake to a grave undistinguishable from the others. "He quite a man!" I followed the rake past the graves of two Marine privates and a SeaBee carpenter's mate to an officer's grave. In the cemetery at Hoga Point distinctions end. There are no officers and men. There are only men. This was the grave of First Lt. Joe Cable, USMCR.

"He got hisse'f into some kind of trouble down south," the Negro droned on, pointing at the grave with a lazy thumb. "Had a fight on de boat wid some his own men. Ever'body called him Fo' Dolla'. Made

him mighty mad. Well, dey kep' de fight sort of hushed up. But two nights before we land here, I und'stand dey was another fight. Dis time de lieutenant he slug another officer. De colonel hear about dis one. He furious. Say dey ain' got no right fightin' among deyselves when de Japs so near. De colonel he want to th'ow de lieutenant in de brig right den. But instead he give de young fellow one mo' chance. Say if he pull hisse'f together on de beach, he goin' to forget all about it. What de colonel doan' know is dat de boy, he pretty heartsick. Trouble he got into down south. He pretty well fed up wid things in general." The caretaker paused and reflected upon the grave. "Seem lak sometime it's de officers doan' know how to take care of theyselves."

"Well, come de beachhead," he continued. "And dis yere Marine, he about de bes' we got on our side. He go after them Japs plenty tough. Lot of wise guys dat been plaguin' him, dey keep dey big mouf' shut. Finally, he git his. Go down all in a lump. Dey tell me de colonel see him go. Some time de colonel come up here and look around. I figger he pretty glad he let de lieutenant outen de brig. But maybe he ain' so glad either. 'Cause if he keep de young man locked up, he be alive now."

The caretaker wandered to the end of the cemetery and shuffled over to the cool mound under the trees. Easing himself down by means of his rake handle, he waited for his partner Denis to appear.

I did not join him but stayed among the graves.

Like the Negro I wondered where the men would come from to take Commander Hoag's place. Throughout the Pacific, in Russia, in Africa, and soon on fronts not yet named, good men were dying. Who would take their place? Who would marry the girls they would have married? Or build the buildings they would have built? Were there men at home ready to do Hoag's job? And Cable's? And Tony Fry's? Or did war itself help create replacements out of its bitterness?

I thought of Hoag as I knew him, a man who never buttoned his shirt properly. He was from Atlanta, but he championed the Negro. He was a rich man, but he befriended his meanest enlisted man. He was a gentile, but he placed Jews in positions of command. He was a man tired with responsibility, but he saw to it that others got rest. Yet when he died a loud-mouthed bully came along to take his place. One night he called Pearlstein a kike. Threatened to have no more trouble with a bunch of — niggers. Called hardworking young De Vito a "grease ball, and you know how they stand up in war!" If he stayed in command much longer, all the patient work Hoag had done would be dissipated. The 144th SeaBees would be unfit to hit another beachhead.

Already they were beginning to fall apart at the seams. The guiding spirit of their team was dead.

Each man who lay on Hoga Point bore with him to his grave some promise for a free America. Now they were gone. Who would take their places? Women? Old men? Or were those who lived committed to a double burden? Theirs and the dead men's?

From the picket fence I heard a cheerful voice. It was Denis lugging a bucket of cold water. He laughed when he saw me by the graves. "You comin' up to see about movin' all dese yere bodies back to the States?" he asked.

"No," I replied. "Are they going to do that?"

"Da's what dey say," Denis laughed, wiping his jet forehead. "Seem lak nonsense to me. If'n I die out here, where I goin' to sleep happier dan wid de men I fought wif? Where I goin' to get a more peaceful dreamin' place dan dis yere spot? Look at dem birds!" I followed the flight of four dazzling birds as they dipped toward the lagoon. "I s'pose you been talkin' to de preacher?" Denis inquired.

"Who's that?" I asked, and Denis pointed to his friend under the tree.

"Da's him. Da's de preacher! In Mississippi he call hisse'f a preacher!" He laughed and took the water to his friend. The caretaker took a long drink, and what was left in the cup he swished into the flowers.

"Doan' you mind what Denis say," he whispered to me. "Denis, he quite a cutup. Sometime he run off at de mouf'."

DRAMA AT SEAL LAKES *

Arthur C. Twomey and Nigel Herrick

[This incident is from the adventures of two scientists, J. K. Doult and Arthur C. Twomey, in their search for the mysterious fresh water seal, *kasagea*, in the unexplored wastes of central Labrador. They rode by train and plane to the eastern shore of Hudson Bay, but the last two hundred and fifty miles inland from there they had to make on foot, dragging their supplies over the snow on Indian toboggans. With them were their guide and interpreter, George Moore; four Indians, Daniel, Jacob, Luk Cashe, and Boyshish; and a little Eskimo, Ekumiak, with his dog, *Kingmee*. They established their camp at one of the Seal

* From *Needle to the North, the Story of an Expedition to Ungava and the Belcher Islands*, by Arthur C. Twomey. In collaboration with Nigel Herrick. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1942. By permission of the authors.

Lakes, and for twelve discouraging days they watched and waited in the bitter cold without seeing a sign of a seal.]

On March the twenty-first, from nine in the morning until five at night, we and the Indians and Ekumiak covered every hole that we knew of, for every minute of the time, without finding any sign of a seal. During all these hours everyone was perfectly quiet, sitting in the separate 'hides' of snow which Ekumiak had built for us.

While I sat in my own 'hide,' I heard a pair of jays fussing in a clump of trees behind me. The sun was out again but it was stinging cold. A red-poll flew over, giving his clear ringing song as he passed into the distant hills. A single Hudsonian chickadee winged above our strange community—as it must have seemed to him—stopping for a moment's rest on a large rock boulder which stuck up from the ice only a few feet from me, and was off again with an excited chirp. Two flocks of rock ptarmigan whizzed by like bullets, flying but a few scant feet above the ground. I sat almost motionless through the whole day, until the fading light and bitter evening chill drove us all at last in a common misery back to camp. George and Jacob Rupert had got in from their far searches before me and with the same old story: 'no *kasagea*.'

That night we did not hear Jacob's rich tenor voice singing 'In the Land of the Sweet By and By.' The Indians' food condition was precarious, and only our own woes and the intentness of our search for the seal had kept us from inquiring much into it. We did not dare to let them shoot within sound of the shrub-bordered lake or river for fear of alarming *kasagea*, and beyond the shrubs there were no birds. According to our calculations, there should still have been reserves of food from the toboggans, but Daniel said he had given out the last they had. We were too absorbed in our schemes to ask why. We simply split our remaining rations, giving half to the Indians, and prepared to quit. Twenty-five pounds of flour, fifteen pounds of beans, ten pounds of split peas, and a little bacon would keep them alive until we could all reach the cache of abandoned supplies just beyond Clearwater Lake Island. My heart was like lead that night and I could hardly look at Doult, knowing what he must feel. The Indians had been on the point of mutiny long before this, and we knew now that they could not be kept inland any longer. Later on that day we meant to let the Indians shoot, but the wind was up and all the birds were under cover.

For the *kingmee* Ekumiak was still in tortures of fear, but he himself was no longer afraid of the Indians. At least he was no longer afraid of young Boyshish. Boyshish knew a little Husky, so that the two of them could have a glimmering of conversation together, and sometimes Ekumiak had gone so far as to sit in the Indians' tent singing hymns

with them, for they knew the same tunes, though in different language. On the night of March the twenty-first, he furnished them with a drama, a pantomimed story from traditional Eskimo life.

The Indians lounged around the tent walls in various postures, looking positively gaunt. They were all muttering among themselves when I came in and they continued to mutter. George was there, having come like me in restless aimlessness. I sat down at George's invitation, and against our general policy, being too tired and careless now to take heed of dignity or of lice any longer. The red stove glowed and crackled. The row of swinging mitts, fantastically dangling from the drying-rack near the ceiling, grew enormous in my eyes, hanging there as a horrible symbol of our sufferings and our defeat. Twelve tired, wet, frozen, *empty* hands. Empty stomachs. Tired, baneful, bloodshot eyes, I thought, watching them. What could we do, except quit?

Were the Indians talking of risking it just one more day, George asked Daniel, but Daniel had already told Doult that they wouldn't. They hadn't wanted to risk it for the last week or more. And who could blame them? As to the food stores, weird suspicions were always crossing our minds, dark and unprovable. The fact remained that there were not even rations enough to make the home-going easy, and the men were in no shape to bear much more suffering. '*Undyeskosen*' ('I am sick'), '*Kewaida!*' ('Let's go home!') they were muttering on all sides.

Their voices rose in malevolence as Daniel's rose in argument. There was a pause presently, with things apparently hopeless. All sat dejected and most of them silent. '*Sheewadan*' ('I am hungry'), added Luk Cashe simply, summing it all up in a nutshell.

But Ekumiak and Boyshish, who had been speaking together, suddenly held up their hands, motioning to the Indians to move back out of the way, and Boyshish began explaining to the group excitedly that Ekumiak was going to show them all the *pibors dowhoon*—'the winter hunt' of the Innuits.

'He will show them,' whispered George for my benefit, 'how the Eskimos used to hunt seals long ago.'

The Indians were looking up with an amazing show of interest—for *them*—as Ekumiak, holding out his hand to me, asked, '*sernuhuti?*'—for the watch out of my pocket. He put the watch on the food-box near him, first holding it up to show the dial and pointing to four o'clock. His body sagged, his eyes closed, his face dropped. He stretched himself on the floor and slept.

'*Tabiscow*' ('darkness'), murmured Boyshish in hushed tones as the actor indicated that it was night.

Ekumiak's pantomime was very realistic. He sat up, yawned,

shivered. He stood up, turned to the stove to warm his hands a moment. . . . He pulled on a pair of pants, and then pulled on another, holding up two fingers so that we understood.

'Two pairs,' whispered George to me helpfully as Boyshish explained again to the Indians. Then Ekumiak donned a parka and repeated the operation also. Two parkas! He put on several pairs of socks and pulled on high boots (tightening the drawstring high at the top so that we understood he meant the Eskimo *Komik*). He put on two pairs of mitts. He pulled up one parka hood. Then he pulled up the other. Again he went to the stove. Again he shivered. Then he gave a great sigh of resignation. After that he acted swiftly, gathering up objects, first a *long* one as he measured it for us by his arms. ('The harpoon,' whispered George, entranced.) Then he hastily revolved one hand about the other in cylindrical fashion, as though winding the long harpoon line about his arm. Down on his hands and knees, he moved forward in a determined crawl, out through the long low tunneled entrance of the imaginary igloo. Turning to us with a smile, which served very well for the first act curtain, he rose and showed us the watch again, pointing to only a little past four.

There was nothing startling in what Ekumiak did at any time, but somehow we felt that there was. The little Innuite had that subtle inborn quality of being able to command attention. Like many fine actors he was not much when he was himself, but given license to be somebody else, his strength was tremendous. Once he had decided to entertain us, he threw his whole soul into it, and was rewarded with a complete success. No Broadway prize play was ever more hung upon by a gaping audience than was Ekumiak's little drama in that drab tent in the Ungava wilderness.

For almost half an hour in reality (and for many hours as revealed upon the watch), we sat in spirit beside an Eskimo's seal hole, with tension in the tent rising to an ever higher pitch. Even the Indians lost themselves in Ekumiak's acted story. Shifting his feet with incredible care among the spruce boughs on the tent floor, the Eskimo would indicate strained muscles—so tired that they must be moved, but moved without the slightest sound. Intermittently, he would show us the watch dial, solemnly and painfully moving his finger completely around the face of it, indicating that the seal hunter in the drama had waited one hour, then that he had waited two, then three, four, five, six, seven and eight.

At the end of ten imaginary hours, Ekumiak picked up the fingers of one hand and let the hand fall limply, as though it were frozen. Then the little Innuite scooped up some snow, very cautiously, very

silently, as always, and began rubbing the limp hand back and forth, slowly, over and over. A gasp went up from the watching Indians at the look of suffering on the fat Eskimo face of Ekumiak, as he sat clasping the supposedly frozen fingers tightly between his legs.

Five more hours went by, as he made plain on the clock. Ekumiak's body was drawn into a knot of misery. His eyes stared, yet he seemed to see nothing. It was his *right* hand now that he clasped between his legs. He even wrinkled his face up once, and felt of it tenderly to show that it too was freezing. When the whole drama had become so painful that I thought I couldn't stand any more of it, Ekumiak suddenly straightened. With a theatrical pause, wherein he riveted our attention, his hand began to move. Almost imperceptibly, he was lifting up his clenched right fist. But he did not strike. He kept us waiting there with him, while the empathy which I myself felt in my muscles strained my back so much that I felt sore afterward. And then, suddenly, he struck. The suspense in the audience had been terrible. A great sigh went up from the Indians, as the hunter at last began to pull and pull and pull the imaginary body of the seal out of the water.

'Kosigwan' ('heavy'), growled out a deep Indian voice in tones of the most intense satisfaction.

It was accomplished. It was done. Then simply, in a pathetic gesture, Ekumiak knelt beside the seal for a moment and bowed his head and clasped his hands together. To my amazement, a tear was running down the cheek of one of the Indians. He had been so hungry! And now he was so thankful.

Rising, flushed with success, Ekumiak murmured something to Boyshish, still in fanciful and hysterical spirit.

'Now the seal is in his stomach!' cried Boyshish wildly, almost beside himself with pleasure, and all the other Indians loudly laughed. They really *laughed*. I could hardly believe it.

I took note of myself and of the whole scene. For twenty-three hours, Ekumiak had told us, an Eskimo used to sit waiting for his seal. Twenty-three hours by the seal hole, without once leaving it! And we were going home tomorrow, from our warm tents—with nothing.

I went back to my tent and to sleep, somehow purged of those dreadful emotions that had beset all of us for the last few days. The situation had not changed, but I had. And so apparently had the Indians. The next morning Daniel brought us their decision; they would stay another twenty-four hours. We would all risk it for one more day.

MR. SHAW'S CHRISTMAS *

George Bernard Shaw

The only music I have heard this week is Waits. To sit up working until two or three in the morning, and then, just as I am losing myself in my first sleep, to hear *Venite adoremus*, more generally known as *Ow*, cam let Haz adore Im, welling forth from a cornet (English pitch), a saxhorn (Society of Arts pitch, or thereabouts), and a trombone (French pitch), is the sort of thing that breaks my peace and destroys my good will toward men. Coming on top of a very arduous month, it reduced me last Saturday to a condition of such complete addledness, that it became evident that my overwrought brain would work itself soft in another fortnight unless an interval of complete mental vacuity could be induced.

Obviously the thing to do was to escape from the magnetic atmosphere of London, and slow down in some empty-headed place where I should be thoroughly bored. Somebody suggested Broadstairs. I had always supposed Broadstairs to be a show place at Wapping; but I found that it was half-way between Margate and Ramsgate, in neither of which famous watering-places had I ever set foot.

So to Broadstairs I went. Let no man henceforth ever trifle with Fate so far as actually to seek boredom. Before I was ten minutes here I was bored beyond description. The air of the place is infernal. In it I hurry about like a mouse suffocating in oxygen. The people here call it "ozone" and consider it splendid; but there is a visible crust over them, a sort of dull terra-cotta surface which they pretend to regard as a sign of robust health. As I consume in the ozone, this terrible limekiln crust is forming on me too; and they congratulate me already on "looking quite different." As a matter of fact I can do nothing but eat: my brain refuses its accustomed work. The place smells as if someone had spilt a bottle of iodine over it. The sea is absolutely dirtier than the Thames under Blackfriars Bridge; and the cold is hideous. I have not come across a graveyard yet; and I have no doubt that sepulture is unnecessary, as the houses are perfect refrigerating chambers, capable of preserving a corpse to the remotest posterity.

I am staying in Nuckell's Place; and they tell me that Miss Nuckell was the original of Betsy Trotwood in *David Copperfield*, and that the strip of green outside is that from which she used to chase the donkeys. A house down to the left is called Bleak House; and I can only say that

* From Hesketh Pearson, *G. B. S. A Full Length Portrait*. Reprinted by permission of Hesketh Pearson.

if it is any bleaker than my bedroom, it must be a nonpareil freezer. But all this Dickensmania is only hallucination induced by the ozone. This morning a resident said to me, "Do you see that weatherbeaten old salt coming along?" "Yes," I replied; "and if you will excuse my anticipating your reply, I may say that I have no doubt that he is the original of Captain Cuttle. But, my dear madam, I myself am Corno di Bassetto; and in future Broadstairs anecdotage will begin to revolve round Me." Then, impelled to restless activity by the abominable ozone, I rushed off to the left; sped along the cliffs; passed a lighthouse, which looked as if it had been turned into a pillar of salt by the sea air; fell presently among stony ground; and finally reached Margate, a most dismal hole, where the iodine and ozone were flavored with lodgings.

I made at once for the railway station, and demanded the next train. "Where to?" said the official. "Anywhere," I replied, "provided it be far inland." "Train to Ramsgit at two-fifteen," he said: "nothing else till six." I could not conceive Ramsgit as being so depressing, even on Christmas day, as Margit; so I got into that train; and lo, the second station we came to was Broadstairs. This was the finger of fate; for the ozone had made me so ragingly hungry that I burst from the train and ran all the way to Nuckell's Place, where, to my unspeakable horror and loathing, they triumphantly brought me up a turkey with sausages. "Surely, sir," they said, as if remonstrating with me for some exhibition of depravity, "*surely* you eat meat on *Christmas* day." "I tell you," I screamed, "that I never eat meat." "Not even a little gravy, sir? I think it would do you good." I put a fearful constraint on myself, and politely refused. Yet they came up again, as fresh as paint, with a discolored mess of suet scorched in flaming brandy; and when I conveyed to them, as considerately as I could, that I thought the distinction between suet and meat, burnt brandy and spirits, too fine to be worth insisting on, they evidently regarded me as hardly reasonable. There can be no doubt that the people here are mentally enfeebled. The keen air causes such rapid waste of tissue that they dare not add to it by thinking. They are always recuperating—that is to say eating—mostly cows.

Nevertheless it was with some emotion that I trod sea sand for the first time for many years. When I was a boy I learnt to appreciate the sight and sound of the sea in a beautiful bay on the Irish coast. But they have no confounded ozone in Ireland, only ordinary wholesome sea air. You never see an Irishman swaggering and sniffing about with his chest expanded, mad with excessive ozone, and assuring everybody that he feels—poor devil—like a new man.

By the way, I did not escape the Waits by coming down here. I had not walked fifty yards from the railway station when I found them in

full cry in a front garden. However, I am bound to confess that the seaside vocal Wait is enormously superior to the metropolitan instrumental one. They sang very well: were quite Waits off my mind, in fact. (This is my first pun: let who can beat it.)

JOHN ADAMS, COLLEGE SENIOR *

Catherine Drinker Bowen

In Braintree, Mr. Josiah Quincy was deeply concerned [over the French invasion of the Ohio Valley]. He had spent many years in Europe, knew the North American situation from a broad angle. He was a friend and correspondent of Dr. Franklin, who a year ago had devised a plan of strong colonial union for better protection against the growing French menace. . . . Had John Adams heard of this plan, Mr. Quincy demanded one day in his living room at the old parsonage? He flung out the question as if he were addressing not a Harvard Senior, but town meeting and town meeting were hostile.

It was a November afternoon of 1753. John had walked down to tea on invitation of Hannah [Quincy]. She was in the room, presiding over the tea table, very distracting in a dress of yellow wool, cut tight to her figure, with a wide, flowing skirt. Sam and Ned were there. Young Josiah [aged ten] lay sprawled on the floor before the fire, roasting chestnuts in a long-handled skillet. Outside, a northeast wind was blowing; the day had threatened snow. Crimson damask curtains were drawn against the dusk; the candles were lighted. Mr. Quincy turned in his highbacked chair. John's father, he remarked, was a man who knew matters of practical government. What did Mr. Adams think of this plan of union, proposed last June at Albany . . .? Had John seen Dr. Franklin's motto for the colonies: JOIN OR DIE?

Yes, John replied. The *Boston Gazette* had printed the motto with the accompanying drawing, reproduced from a Philadelphia paper. A clever device of a snake, broken into parts. Each part bore the initials of a colony or section: New England, New York, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, South Carolina. Underneath was written in bold letters: JOIN OR DIE.

"The colonies," Mr. Quincy retorted bitterly, "seem to prefer the latter contingency."

It was true. When the Albany Plan had been put to vote in the

* From *John Adams and the American Revolution*. Copyright, 1949, 1950, by Catherine Drinker Bowen. Reprinted by permission of Little, Brown & Co. and the Atlantic Monthly Press.

various provincial Assemblies, one by one they had turned it down. Most of them protested that it gave too much power to the home government in England. Connecticut objected violently to the veto privilege of a President appointed by the crown. Benjamin Franklin, pondering these contrary opinions, declared them proof positive of how necessary some plan of union had become. When local sovereignties grew fixed and angry, it was imperative to find some kind of balance between them. England, moreover, had not so much as hinted at a declaration of war against the French. Suppose she left us to fend for ourselves, could we act at all unless we learned to act together?

Mr. Josiah Quincy, addressing his living room of young people, seized the tongs and poked angrily at the fire, looking over his nose. "How near must the French come," he demanded, "before the colonies forget their eternal boundary squabbles? And which is more important—a slice of the Green Mountains for Hampshire, or King Lewis's grenadiers walking down into Ticonderoga?"

"God in his heaven!" shouted Mr. Quincy suddenly, staring straight at John—or what he thought was straight. [Mr. Quincy was cross-eyed.] John cleared his throat and looked away. "God in heaven! Here are three university men—Ned—Sam—John Adams. What does our precious Harvard College have to say about Franklin's plan of union and the French on the Ohio? Or does the Discussion Club"—Mr. Quincy's lip curled—"prefer to debate the governments of Greece and Rome, as it did in my time, keeping life on a high classical plane altogether?"

John smiled, but he was much struck by what Mr. Quincy had said. Walking home that night, guarding his lantern under his greatcoat—it had begun to snow in brief, gusty flurries—he went over the conversation in his mind. It was true, about Harvard's remoteness from the present scene. John was due back at college tomorrow. He had come to love the university, felt more at home there, sometimes, than in the farmhouse on the Coast Road.

As for the Harvard Discussion Club, John enjoyed it more than anything he had ever taken part in, or so he told himself now, climbing the hill toward home, his head lowered against the wind. He had not always enjoyed the club. As a Junior last year, he had been surprised to be invited to join. He was among the first four scholars in his class, but he knew himself as an awkward speaker, and the members were chosen for their skill in elocution and declamation. President Holyoke encouraged the use of rhetoric and graceful phrase, embellished with quotations from the classics. The boys read aloud the latest books and

plays, which last they were careful to refer to as "dramatic compositions"—Massachusetts having just passed a new law forbidding stage plays.

When John's turn came to declaim for the first time, he had been terrified. His part was assigned to him: Oedipus's first speech from Pope's translation of the *Thebais*. John practiced for hours in his room, striding up and down, hurling out the words, now loud, now suddenly *pianissimo*. One gesture in particular he favored. Raising his right hand high, the index finger extended, he brought his arm down slowly until thumb and forefinger pointed directly at the middle man in an imaginary front row. This telling gesture John synchronized exactly with the climax of his hero's speech: "*Go, and a parent's heavy curses bear!*"

The club met in the library, with an audience of perhaps fifty. Several graduate students had been invited, as well as old Tutor Flynt, who after sixty years' service had resigned as a teacher but lived nearby and liked to be included in these celebrations. John had practiced so hard and so long that he had forgotten his original terror—until his name was called and he rose. As he walked to the rostrum, his stomach turned over agonizingly. Panic gripped him from head to foot. He faced the audience, cleared his throat, opened his mouth. No sound emerged. He cleared his throat again, loudly. His eyes, fixed upward in a glassy stare, saw nothing, his arms stuck rigid to his sides. In a voice wholly unrecognizable, he began to speak, stumbled on toward the climax. As he approached it he gasped, inhaled noisily as if he were choking, then lifted his arm automatically above his head, brought it down slowly and pointed. . . .

There was a shout. "Don't shoot, Adams! . . . For God's sake spare a mother's son!"

Laughter broke like a hurricane in the room. Boys howled, wept, fell on each other's shoulder, leaned helpless over their knees, hugging their stomachs with expressions of agony. Even Tutor Flynt was in a state of collapse and made no effort at rescue. John, his notes crumpled in his hands, fled the rostrum in utter, completest defeat.

It had taken him months to forget it. Perhaps he would never, he thought, forget it. He knew his turn to speak would soon come round again. He practiced doggedly in his room with the door barricaded. This time he would speak his piece if the room burst into flames and the ceiling fell in. He would not be driven from that rostrum by the jeers of one man or fifty. He chose, from Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*, words of the hero's that breathed defiance in every line. The more John

practiced, the more he felt at one with this soldier who refused to beg favors from the politicians.

The evening arrived. John rose and made his way to the rostrum. Even before he took his place, the titter started. John's palms were wet. The book, when he raised it, shook miserably in his hands. He began to read Coriolanus's speech to the tribune. The old soldier, scarred with battle, is a candidate for the consulship:

What must I say?
"I pray, sir"—Plague upon't. I cannot bring
My tongue to such a pace . . .

The titter increased. Sudden anger gripped John. He threw the book on the table and walked round to the front. Standing with his legs apart, hands gripped behind him, head flung back, he began Coriolanus's speech from memory:

Look, sir, my wounds!
I got them in my country's service, when
Some certain of your brethren roar'd and ran
From the noise of our own drums.

Utterly careless as to effect, John spat each word as if every man who heard it were his own personal, desperate antagonist:

You common cry of curs! whose breath I hate
As reek o' the rotten fens . . .
Despising,
For you, the city, thus I turn my back:
There is a world elsewhere.

John finished and stood a moment in angry defiance, his round face scarlet, his blue eyes flashing. With a reckless gesture he shook the hair back from his brow, then swung round abruptly and marched to his seat, to the sound of—what was this roaring, overwhelming noise? The audience was clapping, pounding its feet on the floor! Friends rushed up, whacked John on the back. . . . "Adams!" they cried. "You'll make the best speaker of us all, someday." . . . "Coriolanus angry," Sam Locke told the room, "is surely better than Oedipus scared."

John all but wept with surprise and pleasure. His collar was wilted, his fine brown hair awry. The black ribbon at his neck had slipped off altogether. John stuffed it in his pocket. He walked home across the court, arm in arm with Locke and Sewall, singing a song convivial and forbidden. Tutor Mayhew, hearing it from his study, smiled, and did not move from his chair.

From ROUGHING IT WITH GRAMP **Stephen Longstreet*

That year 1919 when Gramp and Mama and myself were crossing America the hard way, via a Model T, was a year of sun and dust in the Middle West. Mama's spine was a little unstrung from riding in the back, and Gramp almost lost half of his mustache trying to crank life into Emma (as we called the car) on a back road when his mustache was caught in the crank. Gramp shot up a full series of purple curses, danced, and held his face. Mama stuffed her fingers in my ears. After that, we were all hungry, tired, and dusty.

Mama said, "We should stop for the night."

"Not 'til we get to Ohio. No decent food 'til we hit the river."

"My spine aches."

"Only a few miles more."

We got real lost just before dark, and Gramp got out under an apple tree and looked around him. "Well, you'd think the natives would put up signs for strangers."

"Can't they read themselves?" I asked.

Gramp looked at me and motioned me into the car, and we went on and came to an old white bridge and crossed. It was warm and dusty in the hot night on the other side. But Gramp put his cap on and said, "It's certainly cooler in Ohio."

Mama, who was getting that hard look around her little mouth, said, "It must be even cooler in hell."

Gramp winked at me as if to say "women!" and drove on. The road got worse, and the moon failed us, and far off a dog howled at something until someone kicked him. We could hear the kick and then the talky dog stopped his monologue. It was pretty bad in those days—the bad roads, the bad maps, the worse food, the far places, and the closeness to death—but the worst was the nighttime far from a town. It's an America that is gone now and I don't have too much nostalgia for it; only people who grew up in big cities and never saw the rural old days collect wagon wheels and cobblers' benches and say "those were the days."

After a while, of course, Emma ran out of gas and water, and one tire ran out of air. "They built great cars in those days," I always hear. We stood on foot, Mama gathering her clothes around her, and Gramp, his last match gone, chewed into the neck of a cold cigar.

* By permission of Stephen Longstreet and *Gourmet Magazine*.

Far ahead a light gleamed and we started toward it over a field laid out in young peach trees. We came to a barbed-wire fence and went through it; I lost the seat of my pants. Then we waded across a shallow creek, Gramp carrying Mama and I carrying Gramp's gold watch—for some reason I now forget.

We were on a wide, wild-grown lawn, and beyond was a huge white house, looking bone-white in the night. A pack of hound dogs ran towards us, scenting meat, I suppose, and Gramp swung his cane, shouting at the top of his lungs.

"Get back, you hounds of hell, get back! Hello there . . . damn it . . . hello!"

Mama, who was very brave when her young were in danger, had placed me behind her and was whacking hound dogs over the head with a small shoe she had removed, hopping gracefully on the other foot.

Some big doors were flung open in the white house and a voice said, "What you doin' out there?"

"Call off your dogs!" Gramp shouted, banging his cane down on a liver-colored hound's head.

"Git off, Nero, git off, Ruffas, git off, Nellie, Cleo. Damn it, Pompey!" We saw a tall thin man with a gun under his arm drop-kick one of the dogs at least ten feet. The rest got back and sat down with their tongues out, waiting. Mama had fainted and the tall man picked her up, gun and all, and carried her towards the house.

"Really sorry," the man said to Gramp, "but this isn't the kind of road many people use these days."

"What road?" asked Gramp.

Inside the house the tall man set Mama down on a sofa and rubbed her hand. He was a handsome young man, and there were more dogs in the house, watching us with big dark eyes. Mama opened her eyes and saw the dogs and said, "Oh, I wasn't dreaming. Dogs!"

"Gaylord is the name," said the young man. "This is Gaylord House."

"I get the connection," said Gramp, growling. "We're lost, and it's no way to treat strangers."

"I agree," said the young man. "Will you join me at dinner?"

"Yes, damn it," said Gramp. "We forgive you the dogs. How about you, Sari?"

Mama sat up and smiled. "I am hungry. Stevie, comb the hair out of your face."

The dining room was huge, the service fine, and the food—after all these years, I still remember it. I can't tell you who was President

then or who won the World Series or the name of the famous murderer of that year, but I remember that meal.

River oysters Rockefeller, made with minced bacon, spinach, parsley, green onion, lemon, cayenne, bread crumbs, and a little real absinthe. Gramp told me later they don't have absinthe any more, but the Gaylords did. Gramp's journal of our trip says the wine was Clos de Vougeot, 1919. The main course was *tournedos* of beef à la Gaylord, an old family way of cooking it, the young man told us. His name was Dennis. Small filets were cut from the heart of a good section of beef, sautéed in butter, placed on thin croutons of toast fried in a little garlic butter, and served with hearts of artichoke, stuffed mushrooms, and grilled tomatoes from which the skin had been peeled.

Mama and I were very hungry and Gramp was always a good man with a plate of food. Dennis smiled at us.

"I'm sorry about the dogs, but we raise them, you know. The Gaylord is a famous breed. Has been for hundreds of years in this state."

Gramp nodded. "The Ohio Gaylord, a fine hound," he said, kicking at a dog under his feet.

Dennis said, "Ohio? This is Kentucky, suh . . ." I noticed a slight Southern tone suddenly in his voice and I looked up at the dueling pistols nailed to the wall.

"Kentucky?" said Gramp. "Damn, I was drifting south more than I thought. Must get that steering wheel fixed."

Mama looked at Gramp as if she hadn't come with him and went on eating. When it came time to serve coffee, a tall, very pretty girl came in (with two dogs, naturally), and she was wearing jodhpurs, those imported Indian riding pants. It was the first time I had ever seen any, and I found them amazing, but in this case form-fitting.

"My sister Dora," said Dennis, making the introductions. "She's been at a dog show. How did we do?"

"Lost," said Dora, throwing her dog whip into the corner. "They're importing their own judges, Dennis. We haven't a chance any more."

Dennis nodded. "It's hard to find honest men among dogs."

Gramp agreed. "Show me a man who loves a dog too much and I'll show you a person who lacks respect for the human race. Present company, of course, left out."

"I'm hungry," said Dora.

I don't remember much more that night. I slept in a big bed all alone, and I heard the dogs in the hall all night sporting a mouse hunt. In the morning we sent out for help to get Emma, our car, in order, but something had snapped someplace and it would be some days before the local wagonsmith could fix it. The Gaylords invited us to stay on and

we did. They were fine people. Much too proud a sister and brother to marry with the decaying stock around them, they raised hounds, kept up the big white family house, and expected to be the last of their line. It was all rather run-down and a little foolish, but to a kid raised on mid-Victorian novels it seemed very romantic and exciting; today we would call the Gaylords snobs, Dennis a secret drinker, and Dora frigid. But this was before Freud and Marx had flavored our lives too much, and we saw the Gaylords as wonderful people upholding the family motto, *Disce pati*, "Learn to Endure."

I was in the garden the next day helping the colored man water the plants, and Gramp was smoking his morning cigar when Dennis came out and spoke to Gramp.

"You know the points of a good dog, don't you, Captain?"

Gramp, who had not been expecting to be hailed by his military title (even if he had spoken of his war efforts at dinner), nodded. "But certainly. They all have four legs, a tail more or less, and enough ears to hear with."

Dennis said, "Frankly, we're short of judges. And I'm on the committee, and I haven't been able to find a really good judge. Would you, sir, like to judge in the hound class this afternoon at the Club?"

"You flatter me," said Gramp, looking at his cigar as if it were a prize dog. "I know a good dog but not a dog's good parts according to the texts."

Dennis rubbed a hound's ears. "You yourself saw the points of these dogs. You remarked at breakfast that you'd never seen such hounds."

Gramp had said "hounds of hell," but Dennis hadn't heard it all. Gramp was a sport. He threw up his hand and nodded. "I'll judge. You can say I will judge and judge . . ."

They shook hands and went inside to try some prime bourbon and branch water. By the time lunch came around they were fairly glowing, and Gramp was explaining the kind of dogs Caesar had in Gaul and the breeding of lap dogs in London according to the shape of their noses.

No matter how the Gaylord hounds did, the food never went to the dogs. Gramp's journal lists baked ham with *sauce bigarade* and chicken wings *fricassée à l'ancienne*. The apple pie was a delight and the men had more bourbon, but Mama and Dora had some *Spritzer*, which was a Rhine wine with seltzer.

Mama and Dora went upstairs after lunch to wave each other's hair, and Gramp and Dennis and I went to the front lawn to pick up the winning team of three hounds Dennis was entering in the show. Dudley, Montez, and Mac were their names, I remember, and they looked just like any other set of three hounds. But Gramp and Dennis were very

pleased with them. The bourbon had mellowed them neatly. We put Dudley and Mac in the back of a blue Jordan roadster with me and Montez in the front between Gramp and Dennis. Mama and Dora would follow later in another car.

We drove off in a clash of gears, the blue Jordan being a very fine car. For the young folk I might explain the Jordan was a real fancy car of the period. This one had a low slung blue body, red wire wheels, and on the hood Dennis had welded in silver a running hound with flapping ears. The horn had been tuned to sound like a braying dog in sight of prey, and the dusty roads saw us pass in gray clouds of glory. Montez in the front seat sat on her round little bottom and howled politely, and Mac and Dudley in the back seat licked my face from time to time and flogged me with their tails.

It was a very nice trip, the car rolling along and the dogs yipping. The towns we passed got out of our way, and it was no time at all before we were at the Club.

It had once been a fox hunting club, but someone had quoted Oscar Wilde about fox hunting being "the unspeakable in full pursuit of the uneatable," and anyway the few remaining foxes got too wise for the dogs. So, Dennis told us, it became a dog and horse club. All the members raised dogs or horses or knew people who did.

Gramp was taken over to a lot of fine gentlemen who shook his hand and pinned a blue ribbon on him almost as large as the ribbons they awarded the dogs. He wasn't a winner, however, I saw—just a "Judge," as the ribbon read.

Gramp and Dennis left me in charge of the dogs, who got on my lap, and I sat holding the dogs while they went inside. They were big dogs, and I only had room for one at a time, so the cutest one won, and she kissed me on the nose, but I was too shy to kiss her back. I just wished I had her in the city and could walk her in the flower gardens. Mama and Dora got to the show at last and they took the hounds and entered them in their groups. At least Mama, who disliked all animal life except raccoon coats from Harvard, went along.

It was a gay time, and they served a few things to charm all dog lovers. A big table had been set up on the front lawn of the club, and while it was just then against the law to drink certain forms of stuff men swallow, they did have a nice odor of bourbon and rye whiskey all over the place, and *plats du jour* of smoked ox tongue in almond and raisin sauce, *mignonnettes* of lamb with chicken livers, and what Mama called *mollusque hors-d'oeuvre*. Also fried chicken and the expected ham.

Gramp and Dennis did their duty here, and then Gramp went off with some red-faced characters with notebooks to judge some dogs. All

the dogs and all the people loved each other, and when they saw anyone they knew they either barked or said, "Hi, Roger," "good doggie, Eddie," or "down, Mike."

Gramp was in great form; at least he was doing a fine job of acting as if he knew dog life and its fine points. A large hound was standing in a dazed way in the sun, and Gramp went up to him and grabbed his tail and some skin under his neck and pulled; then he felt along the chest lines. Then he got down for an eye level view (the eye level of a worm) and scouted the hound dog's angle shots. Then he rolled over almost like a garage mechanic rolling under an ailing car and studied the dog.

Every one seemed very impressed. "There never was any judging like *this* before!" The dog seemed bored, then he looked at Gramp as if he were wondering if Gramp were another dog. Gramp got that look and I think for a moment felt a little foolish because he got up, dusted his knees, and said, "*This* is a dog."

People clapped their hands and some of the other judges came over and talked with Gramp and they agreed on something—that it *was* a dog most likely. Mama and Dora lowered their eyes when two Gaylord dogs got ribbons, but the Best of Show, and the Best in Class went to a big red dog with red eyes and a sensual leer.

On the way home Gramp said, "They outvoted me, Dennis. But your dogs should have won first. Frankly, the other judges were carpet-baggers, not real judges of dog flesh." . . .

We left right after dinner, of which I can't remember a thing any more. I guess the day had worn me down to a mental nub.

We promised to come back real soon, but of course we never did go back. That's the sad part about traveling: You make fast friends so quickly and then it's all over. Dora kissed Mama and kissed me, and Gramp handed out a cigar and shook hands with Dennis, who looked very handsome in white, his nose just a little red.

Emma, our car, was fixed and we piled in and drove off. Mama held a gift ham, the bottles of gift bourbon were at her feet, and Dudley and Mac, the good hound dogs, sat in the road as we pulled away.

"Sorry I couldn't win first for them," said Gramp.

"It was only dogs," said Mama, reverting to type.

"The best dogs in Kentucky," I said.

"Don't be too sure, Stevie," said Mama. "It might be Ohio after all."

Gramp scowled. "I suppose I'll never hear the end of how I mistook Kentucky for Ohio."

"No," said Mama cheerfully.

APPENDIX

PLATO'S ION

(*Translation by Benjamin Jowett*)

Persons of the Dialogue: SOCRATES, ION.

Socrates. Welcome, Ion. Are you from your native city of Ephesus?

Ion. No, Socrates; but from Epidaurus, where I attended the festival of Asclepius.

Soc. And do the Epidaurians have contests of rhapsodes at the festival?

Ion. O, yes; and of all sorts of musical performers.

Soc. And were you one of the competitors—and did you succeed?

Ion. I obtained the first prize of all, Socrates.

Soc. Well done; and I hope that you will do the same for us at the Panathenaea.

Ion. And I will, please heaven.

Soc. I often envy the profession of a rhapsode, Ion; for you have always to wear fine clothes, and to look as beautiful as you can is a part of your art. Then, again, you are obliged to be continually in the company of many good poets; and especially of Homer, who is the best and most divine of them; and to understand him, and not merely learn his words by rote, is a thing greatly to be envied. And no man can be rhapsode who does not understand the meaning of the poet. For the rhapsode ought to interpret the mind of the poet to his hearers, but how can he interpret him well unless he knows what he means? All this is greatly to be envied.

Ion. Very true, Socrates; interpretation has certainly been the most laborious part of my art; and I believe myself able to speak about Homer better than any man; and that neither Metrodorus of Lampsacus, nor Stesimbrotus of Thasos, nor Glaucón, nor any one else who ever was, had as good ideas about Homer as I have, or as many.

Soc. I am glad to hear you say so, Ion; I see that you will not refuse to acquaint me with them.

Ion. Certainly, Socrates; and you really ought to hear how exquisitely I render Homer. I think that the Homeridae should give me a golden crown.

Soc. I shall take an opportunity of hearing your embellishments of him at some other time. But just now I should like to ask you a question: Does your art extend to Hesiod and Archilochus, or to Homer only?

Ion. To Homer only; he is in himself quite enough.

Soc. Are there any things about which Homer and Hesiod agree?

Ion. Yes; in my opinion there are a good many.

Soc. And can you interpret better what Homer says, or what Hesiod says, about these matters in which they agree?

Ion. I can interpret them equally well, Socrates, where they agree.

Soc. But what about matters in which they do not agree?—for example, about divination, of which both Homer and Hesiod have something to say,—

Ion. Very true.

Soc. Would you or a good prophet be a better interpreter of what these two poets say about divination, not only when they agree, but when they disagree?

Ion. A prophet.

Soc. And if you were a prophet, would you not be able to interpret them when they disagree as well as when they agree?

Ion. Clearly.

Soc. But how did you come to have this skill about Homer only, and not about Hesiod or the other poets? Does not Homer speak of the same themes which all other poets handle? Is not war his great argument? and does he not speak of human society and of intercourse of men, good and bad, skilled and unskilled, and of the gods conversing with one another and with mankind, and about what happens in heaven and in the world below, and the generations of gods and heroes? Are not these the themes of which Homer sings?

Ion. Very true, Socrates.

Soc. And do not the other poets sing of the same?

Ion. Yes, Socrates; but not in the same way as Homer.

Soc. What, in a worse way?

Ion. Yes, in a far worse.

Soc. And Homer in a better way?

Ion. He is incomparably better.

Soc. And yet surely, my dear friend Ion, in a discussion about arithmetic, where many people are speaking, and one speaks better than the rest, there is somebody who can judge which of them is the good speaker?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. And he who judges of the good will be the same as he who judges of the bad speakers?

Ion. The same.

Soc. And he will be the arithmetician?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. Well, and in discussions about the wholesomeness of food, when many persons are speaking, and one speaks better than the rest, will he who recognizes the better speaker be a different person from him who recognizes the worse, or the same?

Ion. Clearly the same.

Soc. And who is he, and what is his name?

Ion. The physician.

Soc. And speaking generally, in all discussions in which the subject is the same and many men are speaking, will not he who knows the good know the bad speaker also? For if he does not know the bad, neither will he know the good when the same topic is being discussed.

Ion. True.

Soc. Is not the same person skilful in both?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. And you say that Homer and the other poets, such as Hesiod and Archilochus, speak of the same things, although not in the same way; but the one speaks well and the other not so well?

Ion. Yes; and I am right in saying so.

Soc. And if you knew the good speaker, you would also know the inferior speakers to be inferior?

Ion. That is true.

Soc. Then, my dear friend, can I be mistaken in saying that Ion is equally skilled in Homer and in other poets, since he himself acknowledges that the same person will be a good judge of all those who speak of the same things; and that almost all poets do speak of the same things?

Ion. Why then, Socrates, do I lose attention and go to sleep and have absolutely no ideas of the least value, when any one speaks of any other poet; but when Homer is mentioned, I wake up at once and am all attention and have plenty to say?

Soc. The reason, my friend, is obvious. No one can fail to see that you speak of Homer without any art or knowledge. If you were able to speak of him by rules of art, you would have been able to speak of all other poets; for poetry is a whole.

Ion. Yes.

Soc. And when any one acquires any other art as a whole, the same may be said of them. Would you like me to explain my meaning, Ion?

Ion. Yes, indeed, Socrates; I very much wish that you would; for I love to hear you wise men talk.

Soc. O that we were wise, Ion, and that you could truly call us so;

but you rhapsodes and actors, and the poets whose verses you sing, are wise; whereas I am a common man, who only speak the truth. For consider what a very commonplace and trivial thing is this which I have said—a thing which any man might say: that when a man has acquired a knowledge of a whole art, the enquiry into good and bad is one and the same. Let us consider this matter; is not the art of painting a whole?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. And there are and have been many painters good and bad?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. And did you ever know any one who was skilful in pointing out the excellences and defects of Polygnotus the son of Aglaophon, but incapable of criticizing other painters; and when the work of any other painter was produced, went to sleep and was at a loss, and had no ideas; but when he had to give his opinion about Polygnotus, or whoever the painter might be, and about him only, woke up and was attentive and had plenty to say?

Ion. No, indeed, I have never known such a person.

Soc. Or did you ever know of any one in sculpture, who was skilful in expounding the merits of Daedalus the son of Metion, or of Epeius the son of Panopeus, or of Theodorus the Samian, or of any individual sculptor; but when the works of sculptors in general were produced, was at a loss and went to sleep and had nothing to say?

Ion. No indeed; no more than the other.

Soc. And if I am not mistaken, you never met with any one among flute-players or harp-players or singers to the harp or rhapsodes who was able to discourse of Olympus or Thamyras or Orpheus, or Phemius the rhapsode of Ithaca, but was at a loss when he came to speak of Ion of Ephesus, and had no notion of his merits or defects?

Ion. I cannot deny what you say, Socrates. Nevertheless I am conscious in my own self, and the world agrees with me in thinking that I do speak better and have more to say about Homer than any other man. But I do not speak equally well about others—tell me the reason for this.

Soc. I perceive, Ion; and I will proceed to explain to you what I imagine to be the reason of this. The gift which you possess of speaking excellently about Homer is not an art, but, as I was just saying, an inspiration; there is a divinity moving you, like that contained in the stone which Euripides calls a magnet, but which is commonly known as the stone of Heracles. This stone not only attracts iron rings, but also imparts to them a similar power of attracting other rings; and sometimes you may see a number of pieces of iron and rings suspended from one another so as to form quite a long chain; and all of them derive their power of suspension from the original stone. In like manner the

Muse first of all inspires men herself; and from these inspired persons a chain of other persons is suspended, who take the inspirations. For all good poets, epic as well as lyric, compose their beautiful poems not by art, but because they are inspired and possessed. And as the Corybæan revellers when they dance are not in their right mind, so the lyric poets are not in their right mind when they are composing their beautiful strains; but when falling under the power of music and metre they are inspired and possessed; like Bacchic maidens who draw milk and honey from the rivers when they are under the influence of Dionysus but not when they are in their right mind. And the soul of the lyric poet does the same, as they themselves say; for they tell us that they bring songs from honeyed fountains, culling them out of the gardens and dells of the Muses; they, like the bees winging their way from flower to flower. And this is true. For the poet is a light and winged and holy thing, and there is no invention in him until he has been inspired and is out of his senses, and the mind is no longer in him: when he has not attained to this state, he is powerless and is unable to utter his oracles. Many are the noble words in which poets speak concerning the actions of men; but like yourself when speaking about Homer, they do not speak of them by any rules of art: they are simply inspired to utter that to which the Muse impels them, and that only; and when inspired, one of them will make dithyrambs, another hymns of praise, another choral strains, another epic or iambic verses—and he who is good at one is not good at any other kind of verse: for not by art does the poet sing, but by power divine. Had he learned by rules of art, he would have known how to speak not of one theme only, but of all; and therefore God takes away the minds of poets, and uses them as his ministers, as he also uses diviners and holy prophets, in order that we who hear them may know them to be speaking not of themselves who utter these priceless words in a state of unconsciousness, but that God himself is the speaker, and that through them he is conversing with us. And Tynnichus the Chalcidian affords a striking instance of what I am saying: he wrote nothing that any one would care to remember but the famous pæan which is in every one's mouth, one of the finest poems ever written, simply an invention of the Muses, as he himself says. For in this way the God would seem to indicate to us and not allow us to doubt that these beautiful poems are not human, or the work of man, but divine and the work of God; and that the poets are only the interpreters of the Gods by whom they are severally possessed. Was not this the lesson which the God intended to teach when by the mouth of the worst of poets he sang the best of songs? Am I not right, Ion?

Ion. Yes, indeed, Socrates, I feel that you are; for your words touch

my soul, and I am persuaded that good poets by a divine inspiration interpret the things of the Gods to us.

Soc. And you rhapsodists are the interpreters of the poets?

Ion. There again you are right.

Soc. Then you are the interpreters of interpreters?

Ion. Precisely.

Soc. I wish you would frankly tell me, Ion, what I am going to ask of you: When you produce the greatest effect upon the audience in the recitation of some striking passage, such as the apparition of Odysseus leaping forth on the floor, recognized by the suitors and casting his arrows at his feet, or the description of Achilles, rushing at Hector, or the sorrows of Andromache, Hecuba, or Priam,—are you in your right mind? Are you not carried out of yourself, and does not your soul in an ecstasy seem to be among the persons or places of which you are speaking, whether they are in Ithaca or in Troy or whatever may be the scene of the poem?

Ion. That proof strikes home to me, Socrates. For I must frankly confess that at the tale of pity my eyes are filled with tears, and when I speak of horrors, my hair stands on end and my heart throbs.

Soc. Well, Ion, and what are we to say of a man who at a sacrifice or festival, when he is dressed in holiday attire, and has golden crowns upon his head, of which nobody has robbed him, appears weeping or panic-stricken in the presence of more than twenty thousand friendly faces, when there is no one despoiling or wronging him;—is he in his right mind or is he not?

Ion. No, indeed, Socrates, I must say that, strictly speaking, he is not in his right mind.

Soc. And are you aware that you produce similar effects on most of the spectators?

Ion. Only too well; for I look down upon them from the stage, and behold the various emotions of pity, wonder, sternness, stamped upon their countenances when I am speaking: and I am obliged to give my very best attention to them; for if I make them cry I myself shall laugh, and if I make them laugh I myself shall cry when the time of payment arrives.

Soc. Do you know that the spectator is the last of the rings which, as I am saying, receive the power of the original magnet from one another? The rhapsode like yourself and the actor are intermediate links, and the poet himself is the first of them. Through all these the God sways the souls of men in any direction which he pleases, and makes one man hang down from another. Thus there is a vast chain of dancers and masters and under-masters of choruses, who are suspended, as if from

the stone, at the side of the rings which hang down from the Muse. And every poet has some Muse from whom he is suspended, and by whom he is said to be possessed, which is nearly the same thing; for he is taken hold of. And from these first rings, which are the poets, depend others, some deriving their inspiration from Orpheus, others from Musaeus; but the greater number are possessed and held by Homer. Of whom, Ion, you are one, and are possessed by Homer; and when any one repeats the words of another poet you go to sleep, and know not what to say; but when any one recites a strain of Homer you wake up in a moment, and your soul leaps within you, and you have plenty to say; for not by art or knowledge about Homer do you say what you say, but by divine inspiration and by possession; just as the Corybantian revellers too have a quick perception of that strain only which is appropriated to the God by whom they are possessed, and have plenty of dances and words for that, but take no heed of any other. And you, Ion, when the name of Homer is mentioned have plenty to say, and have nothing to say of others. You ask, "Why is this?" The answer is that you praise Homer not by art but by divine inspiration.

Ion. That is good, Socrates; and yet I doubt whether you will ever have eloquence enough to persuade me that I praise Homer only when I am mad and possessed; and if you could hear me speak of him I am sure you would never think this to be the case.

Soc. I should like very much to hear you, but not until you have answered a question which I have to ask. On what part of Homer do you speak well?—not surely about every part.

Ion. There is no part, Socrates, about which I do not speak well; of that I can assure you.

Soc. Surely not about things in Homer of which you have no knowledge?

Ion. And what is there in Homer of which I have no knowledge?

Soc. Why, does not Homer speak in many passages about arts? For example, about driving; if I can only remember the lines I will repeat them.

Ion. I remember, and will repeat them.

Soc. Tell me then, what Nestor says to Antilochus, his son, where he bids him be careful of the turn at the horse-race in honour of Patroclus.

Ion. "Bend gently," he says, "in the polished chariot to the left of them, and urge the horse on the right hand with whip and voice; and slacken the rein. And when you are at the goal, let the left horse draw near, yet so that the nave of the well-wrought wheel may not even seem to touch the extremity; and avoid catching the stone."

Soc. Enough. Now, Ion, will the charioteer or the physician be the better judge of the propriety of these lines?

Ion. The charioteer, clearly.

Soc. And will the reason be that this is his art, or will there be any other reason?

Ion. No, that will be the reason.

Soc. And every art is appointed by God to have knowledge of a certain work; for that which we know by the art of the pilot we do not know by the art of medicine?

Ion. Certainly not.

Soc. Nor do we know by the art of the carpenter that which we know by the art of medicine?

Ion. Certainly not.

Soc. And this is true of all the arts;—that which we know with one art we do not know with the other? But let me ask a prior question: You admit that there are differences of arts?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. You would argue, as I should, that when one art is of one kind of knowledge and another of another, they are different?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. Yes, surely; for if the subject of knowledge were the same, there would be no meaning in saying that the arts were different,—if they both gave the same knowledge. For example, I know that here are five fingers, and you know the same. And if I were to ask whether I and you became acquainted with this fact by the help of the same art of arithmetic, you would acknowledge that we did?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. Tell me, then, what I was intending to ask you,—whether this holds universally? Must the same art have the same subject of knowledge, and different arts other subjects of knowledge?

Ion. That is my opinion, Socrates.

Soc. Then he who has no knowledge of a particular art will have no right judgment of the sayings and doings of that art?

Ion. Very true.

Soc. Then which will be a better judge of the lines which you were reciting from Homer, you or the charioteer?

Ion. The charioteer.

Soc. Why, yes, because you are a rhapsode and not a charioteer.

Ion. Yes.

Soc. And the art of the rhapsode is different from that of the charioteer?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. And if a different knowledge, then a knowledge of different matters?

Ion. True.

Soc. You know the passage in which Hecamede, the concubine of Nestor, is described as giving to the wounded Machaon a posset, as he says,

“Made with Pramnian wine; and she grated cheese of goat’s milk with a grater of bronze, and at his side placed an onion which gives a relish to drink.”

Now would you say that the art of the rhapsode or the art of medicine was better able to judge of the propriety of these lines?

Ion. The art of medicine.

Soc. And when Homer says,

“And she descended into the deep like a leaden plummet, which, set in the horn of ox that ranges in the fields, rushes along carrying death among the ravenous fishes,”—

will the art of the fisherman or of the rhapsode be better able to judge whether these lines are rightly expressed or not?

Ion. Clearly, Socrates, the art of the fisherman.

Soc. Come now, suppose that you were to say to me: “Since you, Socrates, are able to assign different passages in Homer to their corresponding arts, I wish that you would tell me what are the passages of which the excellence ought to be judged by the prophet and prophetic art”; and you will see how readily and truly I shall answer you. For there are many such passages, particularly in the *Odyssey*; as, for example, the passage in which Theoclymenus the prophet of the house of Melampus says to the suitors:—

“Wretched men! what is happening to you? Your heads and your faces and your limbs underneath are shrouded in night; and the voice of lamentation bursts forth, and your cheeks are wet with tears. And the vestibule is full, and the court is full, of ghosts descending into the darkness of Erebus, and the sun has perished out of heaven, and an evil mist is spread abroad.”

And there are many such passages in the *Iliad* also; as for example in the description of the battle near the rampart, where he says:—

“As they were eager to pass the ditch, there came to them an omen; a soaring eagle, holding back the people on the left, bore a huge bloody dragon in his talons, still living and panting; nor had he yet resigned

the strife, for he bent back and smote the bird which carried him on the breast by the neck, and he in pain let him fall from him to the ground into the midst of the multitude. And the eagle, with a cry, was borne afar on the wings of the wind."

These are the sort of things which I should say that the prophet ought to consider and determine.

Ion. And you are quite right, Socrates, in saying that.

Soc. Yes, Ion, and you are right also. And as I have selected from the Iliad and Odyssey for you passages which describe the office of the prophet and the physician and the fisherman, do you, who know Homer so much better than I do, Ion, select for me passages which relate to the rhapsode and the rhapsode's art, and which the rhapsode ought to examine and judge of better than other men.

Ion. All passages, I should say, Socrates.

Soc. Not all, Ion, surely. Have you already forgotten what you were saying? A rhapsode ought to have a better memory.

Ion. Why, what am I forgetting?

Soc. Do you not remember that you declared the art of the rhapsode to be different from the art of the charioteer?

Ion. Yes, I remember.

Soc. And you admitted that being different they would have different subjects of knowledge?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. Then upon your own showing the rhapsode, and the art of the rhapsode, will not know everything?

Ion. I should exclude certain things, Socrates.

Soc. You mean to say that you would exclude pretty much the subjects of the other arts. As he does not know all of them, which of them will he know?

Ion. He will know what a man and what a woman ought to say, and what a freeman and what a slave ought to say, and what a ruler and what a subject.

Soc. Do you mean that a rhapsode will know better than the pilot what the ruler of a sea-tossed vessel ought to say?

Ion. No; the pilot will know best.

Soc. Or will the rhapsode know better than the physician what the ruler of a sick man ought to say?

Ion. He will not.

Soc. But he will know what a slave ought to say?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. Suppose the slave to be a cowherd; the rhapsode will know

better than the cowherd what he ought to say in order to soothe the infuriated cows?

Ion. No, he will not.

Soc. But he will know what a spinning-woman ought to say about the working of wool?

Ion. No.

Soc. At any rate he will know what a general ought to say when exhorting his soldiers?

Ion. Yes, that is the sort of thing which the rhapsode will be sure to know.

Soc. Well, but is the art of the rhapsode the art of the general?

Ion. I am sure that I should know what a general ought to say.

Soc. Why, yes, Ion, because you may possibly have a knowledge of the art of the general as well as of the rhapsode; and you may also have a knowledge of horsemanship as well as of the lyre: and then you would know when horses were well or ill managed. But suppose I were to ask you: By the help of which art, Ion, do you know whether horses are well managed, by your skill as a horseman or as a performer on the lyre—what would you answer?

Ion. I should reply, by my skill as a horseman.

Soc. And if you judged of performers on the lyre, you would admit that you judged of them as a performer on the lyre, and not as a horseman?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. And in judging of the general's art, do you judge of it as a general or a rhapsode?

Ion. To me there appears to be no difference between them.

Soc. What do you mean? Do you mean to say that the art of the rhapsode and of the general is the same?

Ion. Yes, one and the same.

Soc. Then he who is a good rhapsode is also a good general?

Ion. Certainly, Socrates.

Soc. And he who is a good general is also a good rhapsode?

Ion. No; I do not say that.

Soc. But you do say that he who is a good rhapsode is also a good general.

Ion. Certainly.

Soc. And you are the best of Hellenic rhapsodes?

Ion. Far the best, Socrates.

Soc. And are you the best general, Ion?

Ion. To be sure, Socrates; and Homer was my master.

Soc. But then, Ion, what in the name of goodness can be the reason

why you, who are the best of generals as well as the best of rhapsodes in all Hellas, go about as a rhapsode when you might be a general? Do you think that the Hellenes want a rhapsode with his golden crown, and do not want a general?

Ion. Why, Socrates, the reason is, that my countrymen, the Ephesians, are the servants and soldiers of Athens, and do not need a general; and you and Sparta are not likely to have me, for you think that you have enough generals of your own.

Soc. My good Ion, did you never hear of Apollodorus of Cyzicus?

Ion. Who may he be?

Soc. One who, though a foreigner, has often been chosen their general by the Athenians: and there is Phanosthenes of Andros, and Heracledes of Clazomenae, whom they have also appointed to the command of their armies and to other offices, although aliens, after they had shown their merit. And will they not choose Ion the Ephesian to be their general, and honour him, if he prove himself worthy? Were not the Ephesians originally Athenians, and Ephesus is no mean city? But, indeed, Ion, if you are correct in saying that by art and knowledge you are able to praise Homer, you do not deal fairly with me, and after all your professions of knowing many glorious things about Homer, and promises that you would exhibit them, you are only a deceiver, and so far from exhibiting the art of which you are a master, will not, even after my repeated entreaties, explain to me the nature of it. You have literally as many forms as Proteus; and now you go all manner of ways, twisting and turning, and like Proteus, become all manner of people at once, and at last slip away from me in the disguise of a general, in order that you may escape exhibiting your Homeric lore. And if you have art, then, as I was saying, in falsifying your promise that you would exhibit Homer, you are not dealing fairly with me. But if, as I believe, you have no art, but speak all these beautiful words about Homer unconsciously under his inspiring influence, then I acquit you of dishonesty, and shall only say that you are inspired. Which do you prefer to be thought, dishonest or inspired?

Ion. There is a great difference, Socrates, between the two alternatives; and inspiration is by far the nobler.

Soc. Then, Ion, I shall assume the nobler alternative; and attribute to you in your praises of Homer inspiration, and not art.

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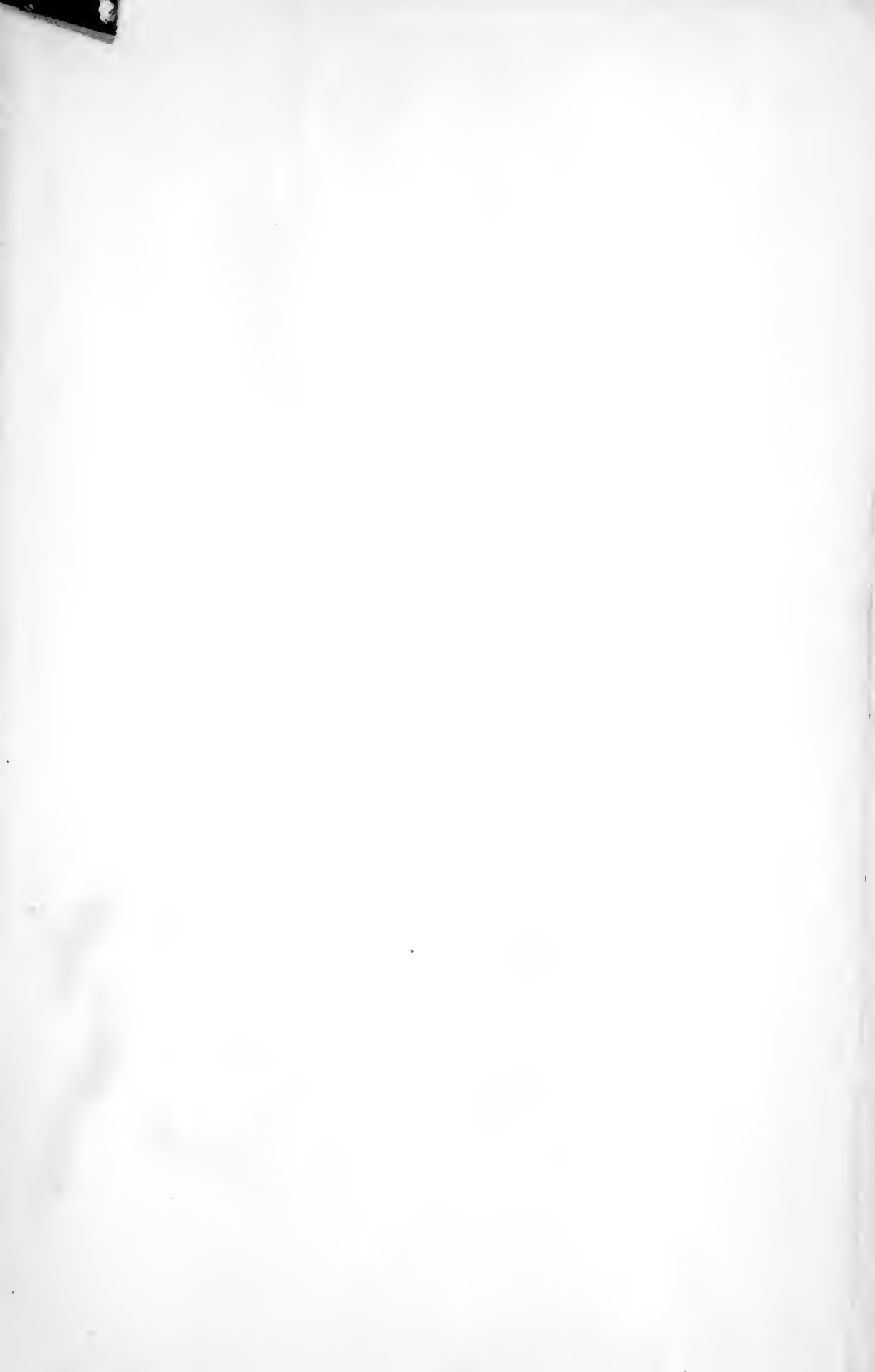
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